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The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

JUNE '94

Soundgarden's  
**Matt Cameron**

Paul Motian

The Drummers  
Of Cuba

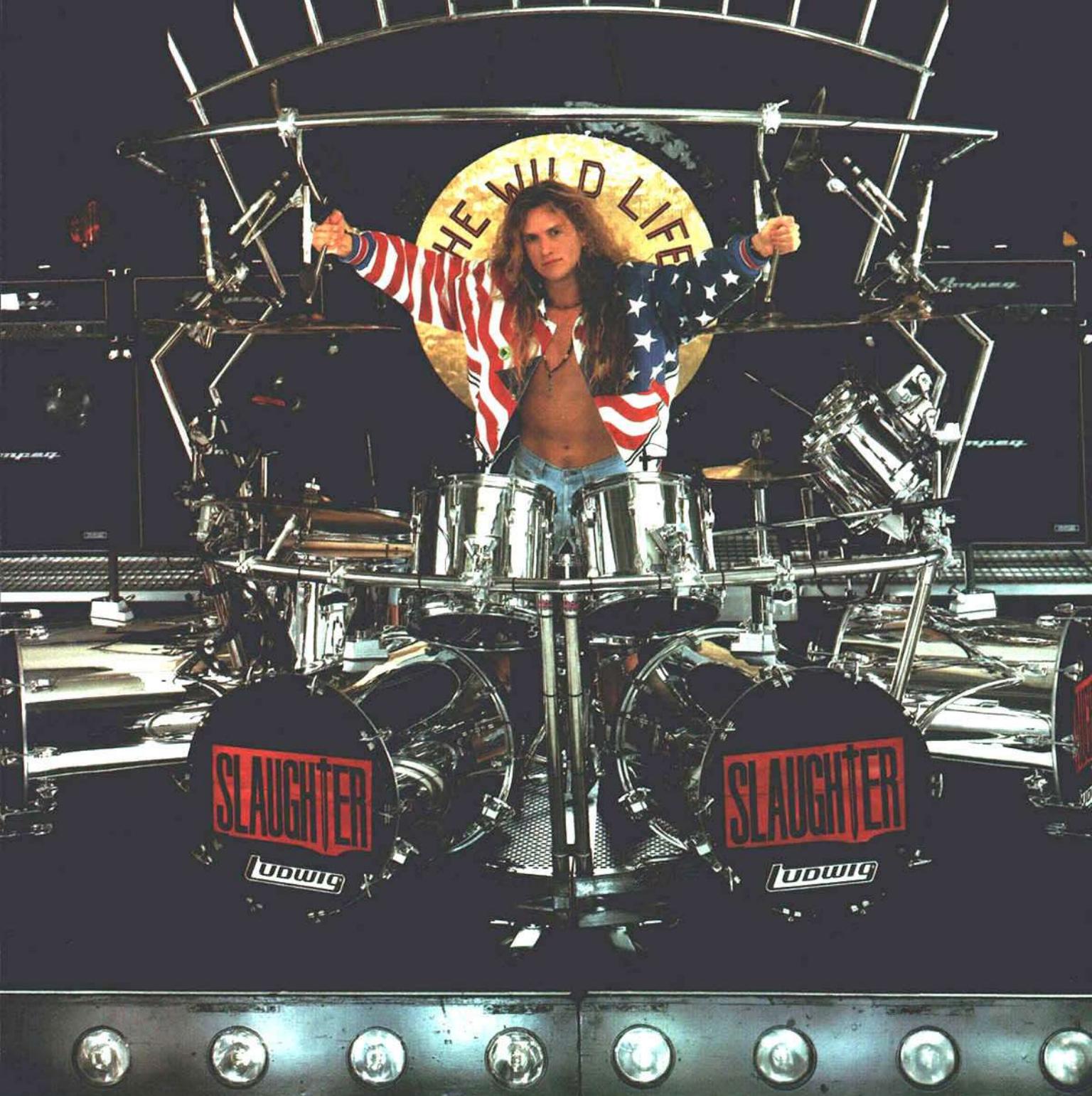
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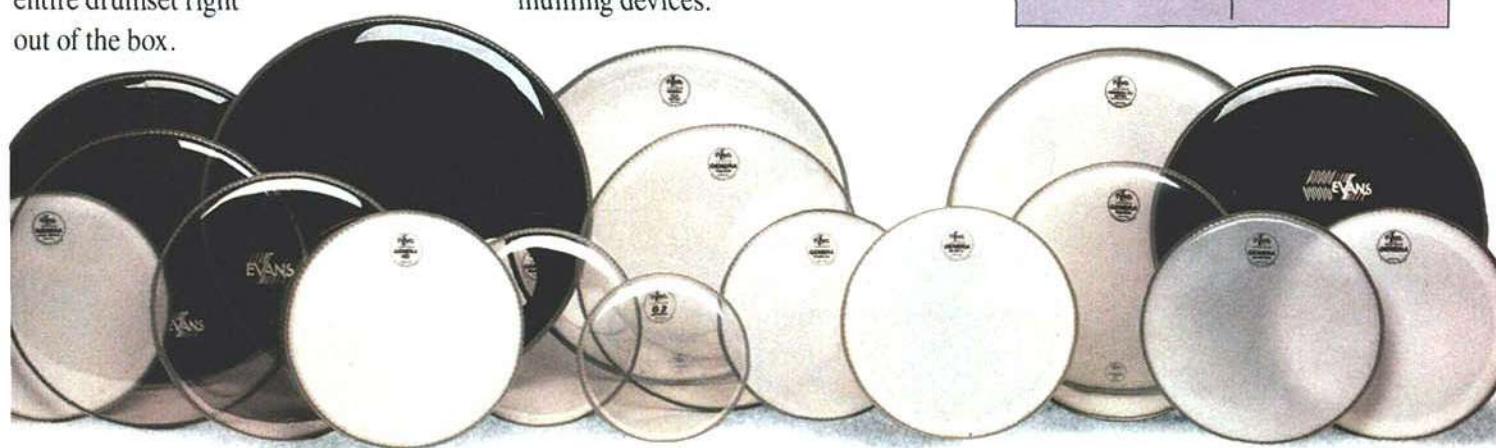
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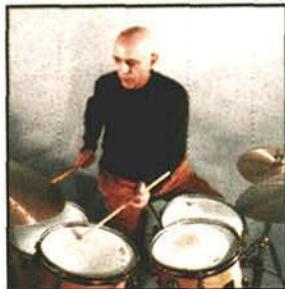
### MATT CAMERON

Soundgarden's new album may be called *Superunknown*, but the mature, diverse, and powerful grooves within should do anything but diminish this band's popularity.

Learn how Matt Cameron did his part by balancing experimentation and discipline.

• *Matt Peiken*

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### PAUL MOTIAN

From his forward-looking playing with the Bill Evans Trio in the early '60s, through bracing modern work with Keith Jarrett, Joe Lovano, and Bill Frisell, up to today's Electric Bebop Band, the truly unique Paul Motian has been one of the least compromising drumset artists we have.

• *Ken Micallef*

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### THE DRUMMERS OF CUBA

The decades-long boycott of Cuba has kept a lot of great music from being heard outside the island.

This month *MD* opens one small window to the culture and hears a whole lot of killin' drumming.

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# A New Age



Not long ago, I was browsing through a catalog that specialized in books, tapes, and videos for drummers. As I scanned the catalog, I couldn't help but recall what a *limited* assortment of study materials we had to work with years ago.

Obviously, the classics authored by Jim Chapin, Ted Reed, and George Lawrence Stone were on the list of required studies, much as they are today. In regards to reading material, a good deal of what was available thirty-five or forty years ago was very rudimentally oriented. A good example of this was the popular Charlie Wilcoxon series. Of the other studies available, the books by Benjamin Podemski, Haskell Harr, Carl Gardner, Harry Bower, and Simon Steinberg also offered a solid drumming foundation, yet all were noticeably dated.

As I glanced through this impressive catalog of the '90s, I thought about what an incredible advantage younger drummers have over those of us who came up in prior years. Nowadays you can get books with accompanying CDs or tapes that deal with nearly every area of drumming. Books on rock, jazz, funk, fusion, big band, and Latin drumming are abundant. And you'll have no trouble finding texts that

specialize in subjects like double bass, fills, coordination, odd time signatures, chart reading, soloing—even books filled with just transcriptions.

Of course, we now also have video, which has matured into a wonderful educational medium. I hasten to remind young drummers that, at one time, it wasn't all that easy to figure out what our favorite players were doing from a technical standpoint. Basically we had the recordings, and maybe a live performance—if a name artist passed through our area. What a great thing it is now to learn at home through our own TV screens from people like Peter Erskine, Dennis Chambers, Dave Weckl, Steve Smith, Simon Phillips, Terry Bozzio, Steve Gadd, and other great drummers.

Today, it's simply a matter of taking full advantage of the materials that exist, and using them to help you become the *best* drummer you can possibly be. And speaking as one who worked through Bower and Steinberg as a youngster, struggled to transcribe licks off poorly recorded LPs, and peered over heads from crowded corners of darkened clubs to learn from the great players—well, no one is happier for the young drummers of today than *I* am!

*RS*

## MODERN DRUMMER

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine



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## Profile: Tommy "Mugs" Cain *of the Michael Bolton Band*



### PERSONAL DATA:

**Tommy "Mugs" Cain**

BORN: Chicago, Illinois, USA.

### CURRENT PROJECTS:

- Currently on a sold-out World Tour with Michael Bolton.

- Video release of live concert "This Is Michael Bolton"
- Recording and Performing with brother Jonathan Cain (Keyboardist, Journey, Bad English) on his solo album project.

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## DAVE GROHL—PRO AND CON

I'm sorry to see your magazine reduced to having no-talents like Dave Grohl on your March cover. Do you really feel he has contributed anything to the art of drumming?

Why is it some of your product reviews come out long after the product has been on the market (for example, the Yamaha TMX—over a year), but when one of these flunk bands has a new record coming out you manage to get their drummer on the cover? The June '93 issue [Charlie Benante cover] is another example. Do the record companies pay you to do this?

As I look through some older issues of *MD* I notice the content and focus was much different than today's issues. Is it possible we might see the drummer from *Wayne's World* on the cover? Or even better, a women drummers swimsuit issue?

S.G.  
Toms River, NJ

I'm in awe almost every month when I get the new issue of *Modern Drummer* because there's usually a great, accomplished drum artist gracing the prestigious cover spot.

Not this month.

Why would you give Dave Grohl a cover? He's not fantastic, he's not accomplished...in fact, I'd go so far as to say he's mediocre, much like his band, Nirvana. Dave's not a *bad* drummer, but he's no phenomenon, and is certainly no more qualified to be on your cover than any unknown drummer.

Come on, guys, quit judging your cover choices by how many records their band sells and get a drummer with real talent. If you want punk rockers, try Lawnmower Deth, Crass, Exploited, Fear, or Circle Jerks. You won't find a good punk band in Seattle. Sure, Nirvana went platinum—but you can thank MTV for that.

L. Pescatore  
Santa Clara, CA

You're going to catch hell for putting Dave Grohl on your cover, because he isn't a chops-meister and he hasn't got

twenty years of studio sessions to his credit. But if a drummer's real value is judged by how he contributes to his band (which is what most big-name drummers, drum educators, and drum books all agree on), then Dave is a perfect candidate. Nirvana's music isn't revolutionary, but it has a unique sound that's instantly recognizable—and Dave's drumming is a big part of that sound. He obviously interests a goodly number of drummers out there, since he tied with Herb Alexander for Up & Coming drummer in your 1992 Readers Poll. If a guy is a major contributor to the sound of a mega-selling band *and* your readers express an interest in him, it would make sense to put him on the cover. I'm glad you did, 'cause I'm one of those drummers who wanted to read about him.

Allen Byers  
Chicago, IL

## STEWART COPELAND IMPRESSIONS

Your March edition of *Impressions* with Stewart Copeland should be engraved in gold and hung on the wall of every club, studio, and dentist's office in the country. Wait...he mentions Africa...make that *the world*. Copeland's personal style—not to mention his performing style—have been and will always be an inspiration to me.

There are two kinds of people who make it big in this business. One is the type who has chops and feel that are original and out of this world, has the brains to make wise choices about who to work with, and is, to his or her very soul, a kind and gentle person (Keltner, Collins, Erskine...). The other is the type who has chops and feel that are original and out of this world, has the brains to make wise choices about who to work with, and who, to his or her very soul, really doesn't give a flying \*#@! what anybody else thinks and just barrels on through (Copeland).

Dave Elvin  
Seattle, WA

While I can appreciate the candid and forthright quality of Stewart Copeland's remarks concerning the various recordings

he listened to for Ken Micallef's *Impressions* column, I feel compelled to state my objection to his terming the music performed by Paul Motian, Bill Frisell, and Joe Lovano as "shit." It takes all kinds of music to make up this world, Mr. Copeland, and mssrs. Motian, Frisell, and Lovano have explored and created more than any musician's fair share of compelling, innovative, enjoyable, exciting, *and* beautiful music. Stewart: Music such as what you heard from the *Motian In Tokyo* recording might be a lot of things to a lot of people, but I can't imagine how you could possibly label it as "Utterly conservative, utterly ungroundbreaking." I'd be willing to cut you some slack, in that the "blindfold test"/ grab-bag nature of listening to randomly (for the listener) selected tracks can possibly skew one's perspective. But, since you make your commentary polemical, and direct it at my colleagues and the art form I care most about, I decided to write. Your comments about jazz..."This is completely predictable, right in a very narrow band of what you have to play if you're a jazz musician..." show that your arrogance is almost as outstanding as is your being ill-informed. If nothing else, I don't think you're very qualified to judge what a jazz musician can or has to play, in whatever bandwidth—just as I would not presume what a reggae/ska/pop musician should "have to play" in his or her field or style of music. Whether one likes a performance or a particular type of music is another matter. I certainly have enjoyed your drumming over the years, but I think you have a big mouth when it comes to something you don't understand.

Peter Erskine  
Santa Monica, CA

## GUIDE TO DRUMSET TUNING

I'd like to congratulate Rich Watson on a well-researched article ("MD's Guide To Drumset Tuning," Feb. '94). It is surprising to witness the many sounds that a single drum can produce. I hear many amateur drummers who have good chops and

*continued on page 47*

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## Stewart Copeland

After an evening spent soaking in their powerfully polyrhythmic performances, it's hard to imagine there was ever a time when the musicians featured in Stewart Copeland's *The Rhythmatists* tour had serious doubts it would ever reach the public.

But according to Copeland, trouble had surfaced on the first day of rehearsals in Miami, when his oddly diverse group—featuring Cameroonian bassist Armand Sabal-Lecco, Zaire native Ray Lema on guitar and vocals, American vocalist/percussionist Vinx, and Spanish flamenco guitarist Rene Heredia—first tried to make music together.

"Everything was crazy," Copeland

explains. "We were playing this Zairean tune, with a flamenco guitarist trying to figure out a part and me behind the drums. Everybody was trying to be the other guy instead of doing what they do best."

Offering an evening of percussion-based world music, including performances by West Africa's Les Percussions De Guinea and the Brazilian trio Uakiti, the three-week tour takes its name from Copeland's 1984 solo album—a sonic tour of the African bush released shortly before the breakup of the Police.

Though he's spent most of the time since then writing movie soundtracks, ballet scores, and operas—picking up the

sticks occasionally to play with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra and the short-lived band Animal Logic—the forty-one-year-old percussionist saw this current tour as a way to revisit the themes of cultural cross-pollination explored on the original record.

"If you look at American culture from outside of America, it's the music that's really unique—reaching out into the world to influence people," Copeland states. "And guess what? It's not a descendant of Europe but of Africa that has the most impact—specifically, the backbeat and the blue note."

• Eric Deggans

## Ted Parsons

The title of Prong's intense new record owes as much to drummer Ted Parsons' rhythmic approach as it does to the band shedding its skin.

With *Cleansing*, Parsons' no-nonsense attack drives the New York City industrial-metal unit through some of the heaviest material in its eight-year catalog. But with the addition of former Killing Joke members Paul Raven on bass and John Bechdel on synthesizer, every note seems to matter.

"I stripped down my drumming in a lot of the parts just to get to the meat of the songs. But there's also a lot of tribal stuff on there, too," says Parsons, who spent three months writing the record with co-founding member Tommy Victor. "[Producer] Terry Date wanted to get a lot of good, clean drum sounds, with no reverb to

cover up anything that didn't sound right. This is a no-frills record."

Prong becoming a foursome for the first time has allowed Parsons to hand over sampling chores and concentrate more on his drumming. Though keyboards will play a more important role in the band's live sound, Ted says he's intent on retaining Prong's patented edge. "We were one of the first alternative bands to be signed by a major label. Now I don't even know what alternative is anymore," he says with a laugh. "We've never fit into any kind of cliche, clique, or style. But I know we've made an amazing record, and that's enough for me. If people don't like it or just plain miss it, it's their loss."

• Matt Peiken

## Jason Harnell

Jason Harnell has been doing various sessions and live work around L.A. for a while, but since this past June he's been concentrating on his gig with Maynard Ferguson. Jason says that his invitation to join Maynard's band was very last-minute. Even the audition was informal: Musical director/sax player Chip McNeil simply went to Harnell's house, played him a couple of tunes, and he was in.

Despite such a laid-back introduction, according to Jason, the gig is the most challenging he's ever encountered. In fact, it seems to call for three different drum-

mers. "The band needs lots of energy from me," he says. "I've got to do the big band thing—play figures and make the band swing—yet I have to please everybody individually as well. They're all great improvisers, and they each want an individual thing from me behind their solos. Chip McNeil really likes a lot of activity behind his tenor solos. He almost requires that I over-play sometimes. He likes a lot of energy—a lot of notes and bashing. Then alto sax player Matt Wallace requires more of a groove thing. His solos are more straight-ahead. And behind Maynard, I

basically have to groove hard and play *loud*. He plays with a lot of volume and power, so it requires that I play the ride cymbal harder than I ever have in my life."

Jason gets his own solo space as well. "I get to solo every night, so I had to think about how I wanted to structure the solo. Every night I try to vary it and think of different ways to make it interesting, and I try to do that by using dynamics and colors. I feel excitement is important. I don't feel people are there to check out all the technique. They want to *feel* something."

• Robyn Flans

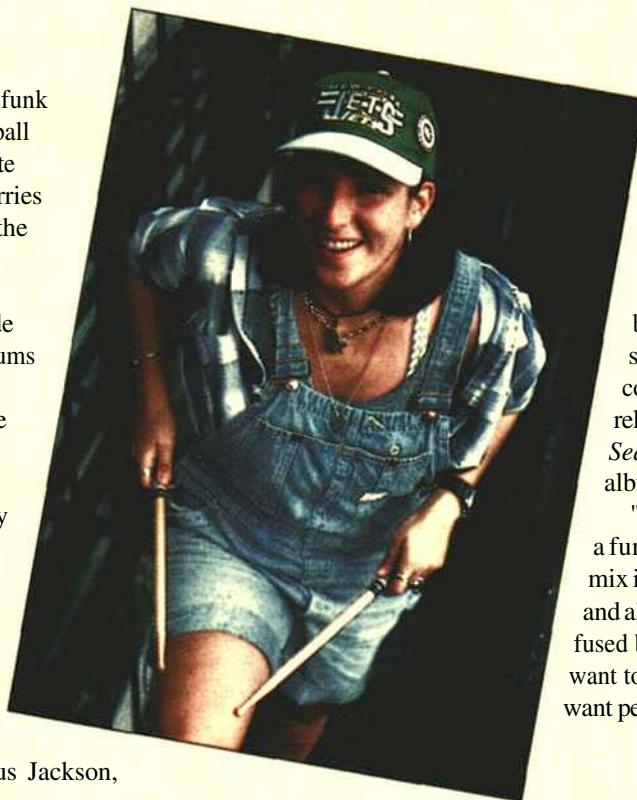


## Kate Schellenbach

Luscious Jackson is a New York-based funk band named after a professional basketball player from the 1960s. As drummer Kate Schellenbach humorously puts it, "It carries on the tradition of the Jackson name in the music industry."

Kate herself is a native New Yorker, practically raised on the Lower East Side club scene. When she began playing drums at thirteen, it was the music of the punk movement that inspired her. "One of the first bands I was a member of was the Beastie Boys," says Kate. "It was when they were a hardcore band. That was my first taste of playing drums in a band, and I was still a teenager then. After that experience I played in a whole bunch of New York City bands—everything from New Wave to hard rock. I was also in the Lunachicks for a spell."

Before she actually joined Luscious Jackson,



ironically, Beastie Boy drummer Mike D signed the band up to his budding record label, which is distributed by Capitol Records. "It's great for us," comments Schellenbach, "because we have the freedom of being on a small label, but the support and clout of a big record company." Luscious Jackson released an EP in late '93 called *In Search Of Manny*, and a brand new album is due out shortly.

"Luscious Jackson is pretty much a funk band," says Kate. "But we also mix it up with rock, reggae, country, and alternative. Some people are confused by all the musical styles, and they want to see more of a focus. But we want people to be *less* focused, I guess."

•Teri Saccone

## News...

**Ron Wikso** is now working with David Lee Roth.

**Chester Thompson** has left **Phil Collins** and now resides in Nashville. **Steve Forman** is now playing percussion with Collins.

**Adam Nussbaum**'s schedule has continued to be hectic: He spent the last three months on the road with Bob Berg, including stops in the former Soviet Union. Immediately upon his return he left for a two-week tour of Japan with Toots Thielemans. Adam's currently in Germany recording with the WDR big band, and he'll be on the road with the John Abercrombie trio shortly (supporting their new release).

**Gigi Worth** is playing percussion with Christopher

Cross. (She also sang on his new record.) **Jody Cortez** is the drummer. Jody recently worked on a Crosby, Stills & Nash project.

**Paul Angers** recently played a couple of local gigs with John Fogerty. He can also be seen as the on-camera drummer in the new Disney movie, *Angie*.

**Ricky Lawson** in the studio with Everette Harp, George Duke, Sergio Mendez, and Take 6. He's also programming, drumming, arranging, and producing Johnny Gill's tribute to Donny Hathaway and Sam Cooke, is producing and arranging for Howard Hewitt, and is in the process of selling his drumkit from Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* tour.

**Steve Smith and Tim**

**"Herb" Alexander** can be heard on the new album by Michael Manring, *Thonk*. Steve can also be heard on a new release by Corrado Rusticci. And for fun, he's been playing double drums on some Bay area gigs with **Narada Michael Walden**, with **Michael Carrabello** on percussion.

Dweezil and Ahmet Zappa's band Z recently released its debut album, *Shampooohom*, which features drummers **Terry Bozzio**, **Toss Panos**, **Tal Bergman**, **Mark Craney**, **Morgan Agren**, and **Keith Knudsen**. Since the recording, **Joe Travers** has joined as the band's full-time drummer.

The late **Irv Cottler** is on a 1962 Frank Sinatra album just released on Reprise Records

called *Sinatra And Sextet: Live In Paris*.

**John Wackerman** has been in Hawaii working on Lindsay Buckingham's upcoming LP.

**Brooks Wackerman** can be heard on Infectious Grooves' new release, *Groove Family Cyclo*. He will be touring with the band in late '94.

**Dave Beyer** now touring with Melissa Etheridge.

**Michael Blair** producing Swedish band Eggstone and continuing his musical director role for Swedish TV. And congratulations to Michael and his wife, Lena, on the birth of their daughter, Olivia.



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## Simon Phillips

**A** I can't tell you enough what your drumming and your style have done for me. I now have devoted my entire life to playing the drums, and I thank you for your inspiration. Are you a self-taught player, or did you have a teacher? And do you plan on teaching in schools or on a private level in the future?

Rich Genovese  
Niagara Falls, NY

**A** Thank you for your kind comments. I am basically self-taught. My father was a Dixieland bandleader and my mother was a big swing fan. As a result, I grew up with my dad's band rehearsing occasionally at our house, and Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw constantly pumping out of my mum's stereo system. There was no escape, so consequently I started "hitting" things

when I was about three and a half years old. When I was eight, my father sent me to a teacher in London named Max Abrams. He taught me to read music.

I used to sit in with dad's band occasionally until I joined full-time in 1969. I played numerous gigs, recording sessions, and broadcasts over the next four years. My father was my main teacher—not in a drumming sense, but in a musical sense. He wasn't concerned about the technicalities of playing; he just wanted to hear what was right for his band. I owe a lot to that sort of apprenticeship.

With regards to teaching: At the moment I don't have the time to teach. I am not sure I would be that good at teaching; I prefer to give clinics and the odd master class. Maybe teaching will be something I'll do later on in life!

## Aaron Comess

**A** I enjoy your style of drumming, and it is an inspiration for me. I'd like to know what kind of drums, cymbals, and heads you use.

Brian Miller  
Aurora, IL

**A** Thanks for writing, Brian. I appreciate your kind words. To answer your question, on *Pocket Full Of Kryptonite* I used a full Brady drumkit: 10", 12", 14", and 16" toms, a 22" bass drum, and a variety of Brady snare drums. I've recently been playing a set



of GMS drums on the road, and I'm very happy with them. I play Zildjian cymbals, and I've been using 18" and 19" A Custom crashes, a 20" A Custom ping ride, and a set of 13" K hi-hats. I use Remo coated Ambassador batter heads and clear Ambassador bottom heads. Good luck to you.

Photo by Paul La Rata

## Dave Lombardo

**D** I'm fifteen years old, and I've been playing drums since I was seven. I'm into many music scenes, like jazz and blues, but I'm also a big fan of thrash music. You've always been an inspiration to me and my playing. I was incredibly impressed with your playing while you were a member of Slayer—especially how you kept the fast beat and the double bass drum going constantly. How do you manage to get in shape and keep your arms and legs from getting tired at the fast tempos you play? I'd also like to know how you developed your intense style in the first place. Also, what do you plan on doing for the future?

Cole Johnson  
Baton Rouge, LA

**A** I appreciate your interest in my playing, Cole. Right now you're at the age where you begin to develop your own style and trademarks. Don't limit yourself to the styles of music you listen to.

Your first question asked how I consistently play double bass throughout a show. The answer is: practice. You have to build up your stamina; you can't expect to go on stage and do twenty songs without working hard at it. Playing drums is physically demanding; playing metal or thrash drums is physical torture. So you need to prepare yourself. What keeps my arms and legs from tightening up is stretching. Pick up some pointers from your physical education teacher at school.

You also asked how I achieved my ability and my style. I think it was my determination to be ahead of everyone else. You also have to enjoy the music you're playing. You can't create to something you don't enjoy.

As of now, my plans are to release an album with my new band, Grip. I'm also working with other musicians on their projects. One was a group I worked with last summer called Voodoo Cult. I'm anxiously awaiting the release of that recording.



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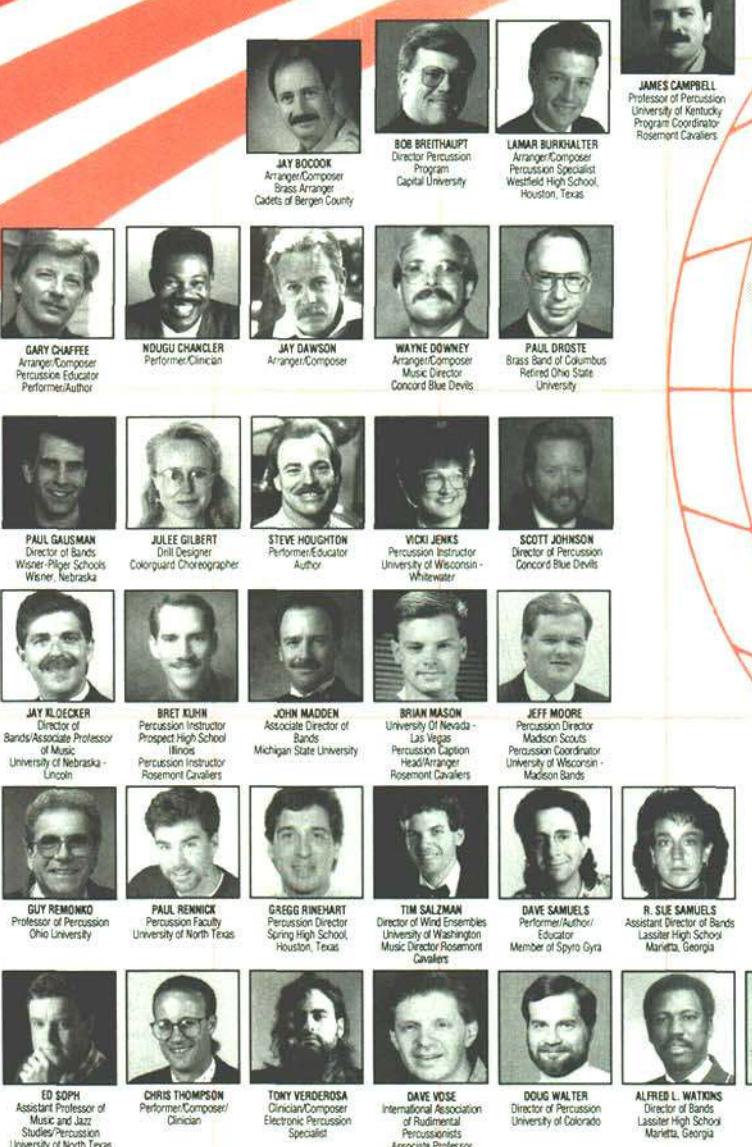
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## Block Snare Drums

**Q** Could you please tell me what drum companies make block snare drums similar to those made by Brady and ADM? I believe those companies have gone out of business.

T. Russo  
Houston, TX

**A** Although we have no information regarding the status of ADM, we can tell you that Brady Drums is definitely *not* out of business. They have, however, had some difficulty with their block snare drum production and are currently offering only ply shells made of jarrah wood. Their current U.S. distributors are Drum Partner c/o Boris Kosse, 7200 Franklin Ave., #503, Hollywood, CA 90046 and Woody Compton, 1325 Sharon Road, Tallahassee, FL 32303, (904) 386-2388. You can also contact the company directly, at P.O. Box 121, Kelmscott 6111, Western Australia.

Other companies offering drums with block (or stave) shells include the Kenner

Drum Company (Rt. 1, Box 150, California, KY 41007, [606] 635-5218.), the Bison Drum Company (109 N. Milwaukee Ave., Wheeling, IL 60090, [708] 459-1255), and Noonan Custom Drums (34a Harmer St., Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1AX, England). Kenner's stave-shell drums were reviewed in the November '92 issue of *MD*; the Bison Volcano drum was reviewed in May of '92.

marine Ludwig set for rehearsal, but I saw him play oyster black and have seen photos of oyster blue kits. (Some collectors mistakenly reverse the names, as in 'black oyster'.)

"You mentioned the term 'blue pearl.' Blue pearl was sky blue pearl, and not a Ringo color. The original oyster finishes were translucent. Sky blue looks like a blue version of marine pearl and is opaque.

"If your finish is translucent, the drums have a Chicago keystone Ludwig badge, the kit has four drums in 'normal sequence' of sizes (22" bass, 13" and 16" toms, or 20" bass, 12" and 14" toms with a matching snare), and if it is in excellent condition, I'd suggest a price of \$895. A *Supra-Phonic* snare would make the price about \$795. 'Decent shape' would reduce the value 20% to 40%."

Ethan Hartshorn  
Pittsburgh, PA

**A** According to drum historian Harry Cangany, "Ringo Starr used two different Ludwig finishes in the classic Beatle period. Technically, he had a white

## Pedal Problems

**Q** Last summer I purchased a Gibraltar 7577 double bass pedal.

*continued on page 50*

**Set yourself up like Mike Palmer.**

(Garth Brooks)



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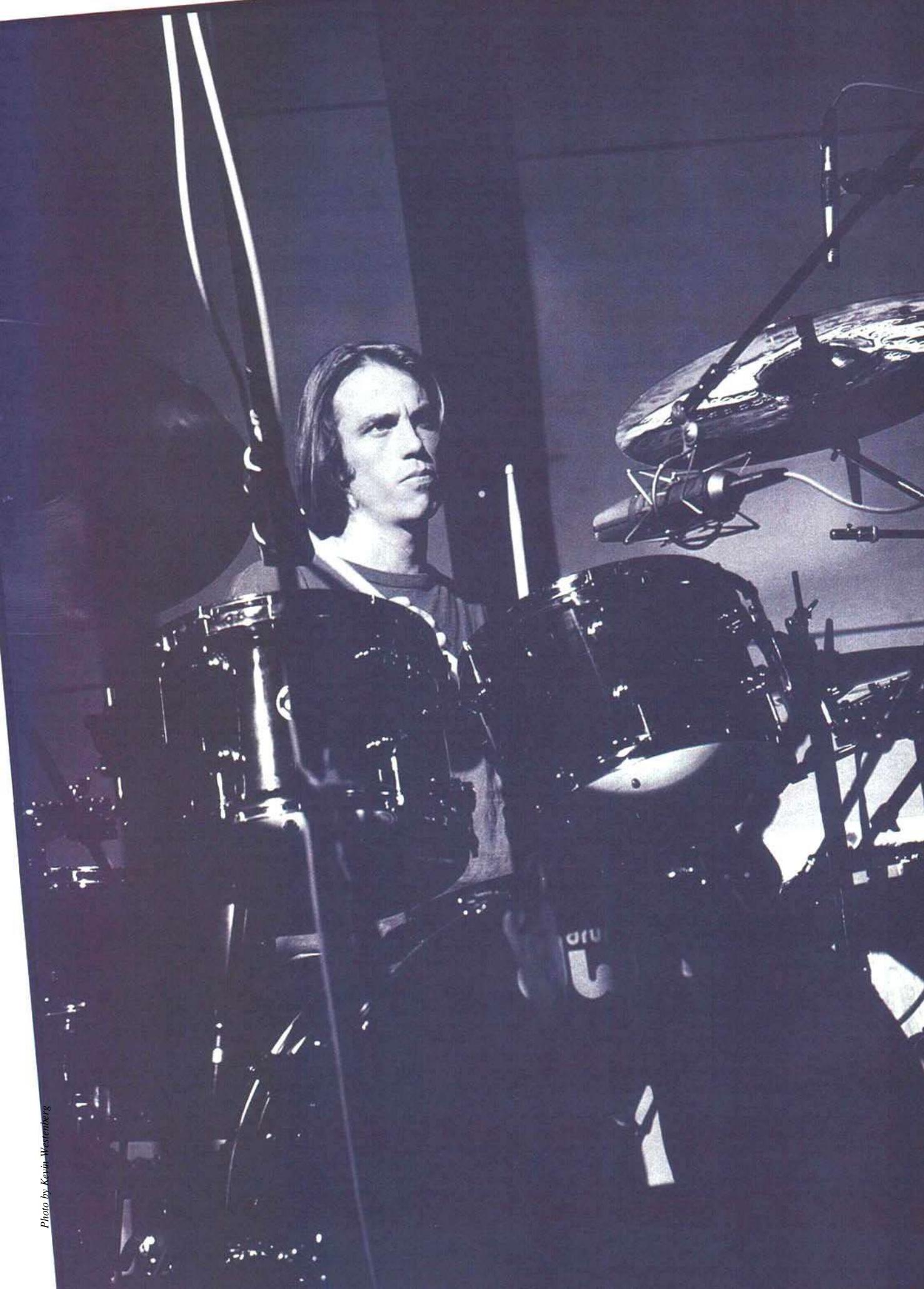


Photo by Kevin Westenberg

# Soundgarden's Matt Cameron

## Breaking New Ground

Matt Cameron, much like the other members of Soundgarden, isn't in the best of moods. At the very least, he's distracted. The band left New York so dissatisfied with the mastering of their new record that they decided to start again from square one, here on the first Sunday of this past December at the A&M Records studio in Hollywood.

But things don't immediately seem any better on the West Coast. Unnerved by a mix of the song "Fourth Of July," Cameron insists the drums are louder in the left speaker. Chris Cornell (Soundgarden vocalist) suggests he move to the middle of the couch, about an eighteen-inch change of perspective, for a more accurate ear test. Instead, Cameron leaves the room.

Important as the mastering is, it only ranks second on the drummer's worry list for the week. Hater, Cameron's side project with Soundgarden bassist Ben Shepherd and two other musicians, will open a Pearl Jam show in Seattle six days from now.

"I've got to sing on Saturday," says Cameron, regarding his lead vocal cameo on the Hater tune "Sad McBain." To that point, Hater had never played publicly, only having released a low-key, self-titled album last summer. "I've sung background vocals a lot from behind the kit. But I've never stood in front of thousands of people and sung an entire song before," he says with a stunted laugh. "I think I'm more nervous than I've ever been."

By Matt Peiken

Cameron's worries proved unfounded. Saturday's crowd, as it turned out, was too busy chanting "*Ed-die, Ed-die...*" during Hater's set to critique Cameron's croonings. And it only took the better part of a day to unequivocally pin the earlier mastering mystery on equipment failure.

Whether Cameron has a future behind the microphone waits to be seen. There's little doubt, though, about Soundgarden's new disc—the marvel of *Superunknown* would come through over kite string and *Styrofoam* cup. It's not only the band's most eloquent statement, but a defining moment in modern rock. For here, Soundgarden officially drop-kicks grunge and any other straight-jacket label into the history books.

There's such a relaxed, early-'70s vibe to this record, it's hard to believe

this is the same band that once belted thirty-five expletives in one song. But for his part, Cameron has always injected maturity into Soundgarden's music. His ghost-note grooves and the uncanny ability to make odd time feel like straight time have already earned him status among rock drumming's elite pacemakers.

While his style hasn't markedly changed since Soundgarden's earliest EPs from 1987, his vocabulary has expanded. Cameron used two different and contrasting kits to construct the rhythmic foundation for *Superunknown*, coloring the sounds from there with alternating tunings and liberal cymbal swapping. They're just some of the alluring elements that continue to mark Cameron's playing and, in turn, give Soundgarden its implacable edge.



Cameron in the studio with (left to right) Chris Cornell, Kim Thayil, and Ben Shepherd

Satisfied with the results he achieved with *Superunknown*, Cameron hopes it marks just another step in his personal musical growth.

"I'm happier with my drumming than I've ever been before, but I think one of the reasons for that is because the songs were fully conceived," Cameron says. "We went into the studio with the idea of approaching each song on its own terms. We'd record one entire song—everything on it—and then go to the next song. That gave us a much better focus. Before, we'd do a batch of songs on drums and a batch of songs on bass, and it all started to sound the same. We feel the songs on the new record have a lot more variety and substance to them. They're much more interesting to listen to, but hopefully there's a thread that connects them all."

Diverse as *Superunknown* is musically, Cameron consciously maintained a relatively low profile when laying down his drum parts. "I approached everything in much more simple terms and just tried to fit what I played to the songs a little better and dig more into the music," he says. "That in itself is a lot more difficult than playing odd time signatures and doing wacky drum fills. There are still only a few songs in 4/4, but we all tried to strip down our approaches to the music and have the song be the main focus. And it wasn't difficult to do at all; I just had to start hearing the music differently."

"I think some of the music on our past records is a little more show-offy," Matt continues. "Everyone was trying to make their individual part stand out more than it should have—not all the time, but enough to notice it. We listen back to some of our earlier records and cringe because it sounds like we were just showing off. Personally, on the *Ultramega O.K.* album, I feel there are some songs with bad approaches to drumming. 'Nazi Driver' is a song that comes to mind. I totally missed a drum on 'Flower,' but we left it in there. One of the things I like about the new

record is that we maintained a raw edge, but we were much cleaner with it and more sure of ourselves than ever before."

While new songs such as "Limo Wreck" and "Mailman" draw musically on elements familiar to Soundgarden fans, "Half," "Black Hole Sun," and "Like Suicide" knock

down any walls that had previously threatened to corner or pigeonhole the band. "We've never wanted to limit ourselves or define what we were going for musically," Cameron explains, "but I think this record really exposes how narrow our vision may have been in the past. A song like 'Half' is a pretty unique tune for us,

## Matt On Matt

by Matt Cameron



**"Jesus Christ Pose"**—verse section (from *Badmotorfinger*)

As soon as I played this pattern everyone dove right in, and within an hour we had the guts of the song. The approach we took on this one was pure assault of the senses. Canadians dance to this song.



**"Spoonman"**—verse section (from *Superunknown*)

I tried to keep the spirit of Chris's original demo, which had a lot of pots and pans and wooden spoon sounds. I added bongos and various metal junk lying about. Artis the spoonman, the inspiration for the song, put the finishing touches on with his one-of-a-kind polyrhythmic spooning. The drum part basically follows the guitar.



**"Limo Wreck"**—verse section (from *Superunknown*)

Ah, the majesty of rock. This is just your basic, slow, curdling 15/8 groove. A friend of Kirn's says Mozart wrote things in this rhythm. Amadeus rocks!



**"Wooden Jesus"**—intro section (from *Temple Of The Dog*)

Steve Gadd's playing fried me when I first heard it. Like so many of my peers, I went through an intensive Gadd phase, where everything I played was a direct rip-off of his beautiful chops. This pattern incorporated the Gadd ruff and the Gadd vibe.



and we didn't want to exclude it from the record just because it didn't sound like a Soundgarden song. We wanted that kind of diversity, that left-field approach to some of the music."

Cameron's passion for the new record didn't develop, though, until late in the recording stages. "We weren't really blown away when we first heard the demos for 'Black Days,'" Matt explains, "because we hadn't made it into a Soundgarden song yet. But Ben added a great bass part that fit with the vocal melody, and Kim [Thayil, guitarist] put in some harmony parts on the end that took the song into another gear. Chris has written a lot of songs over the years that we've never been able to sink our teeth into until now, songs like 'Fell On Black Days' that have more of a pop arrangement. And the result proved to be songs that aren't necessarily more accessible, but have more depth and are more musical than anything we've done before. Still, they didn't sound like Soundgarden songs for me until all

## The Matt Pack

According to our cover star, here are his proudest long-playing moments:

**Soundgarden:** *Screaming Life* (SubPop), *Ultramega OK* (SST),  
*Badmotorfinger* (A&M), *Superunknown* (A&M)

**Tone Dogs:** *Ankety Low Day* (CZ)

**Temple Of The Dog:** *Temple Of The Dog* (A&M)

**Hater:** *Hater* (A&M)

And here's an idea of the drummers Matt's been inspired by the most:

**Max Roach** (on Duke Ellington's *Money Jungle*)  
**Keith Moon** (on the Who's *Live A? Leeds*)

**John Bonham** (on Led Zeppelin's *Physical Graffiti*)

**Mitch Mitchell** (on Jimi Hendrix's *Axis: Bold As Love*)

**Elvin Jones** (on John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*)

**Steve Gadd** (on Chick Corea's *The Leprechaun*)

**Steve Jordan** (on Keith Richards' *Talk Is Cheap*)

**Ritiki Fullwood** (on Funkadelic's *Standing On The Verge Of Getting It On*)

**Trilok Gurtu** (on his own *Living Magic*)

**Drumbo** (on Captain Beefheart's *Clear Spot*)

the tracks were down.

"But I wasn't worried," Matt insists.

"We trust our instincts that, as a band, we'll get what we're after through the

collaborative effort. We don't really road-test the new songs anymore or rehearse a lot before we go in to record. We've always approached our

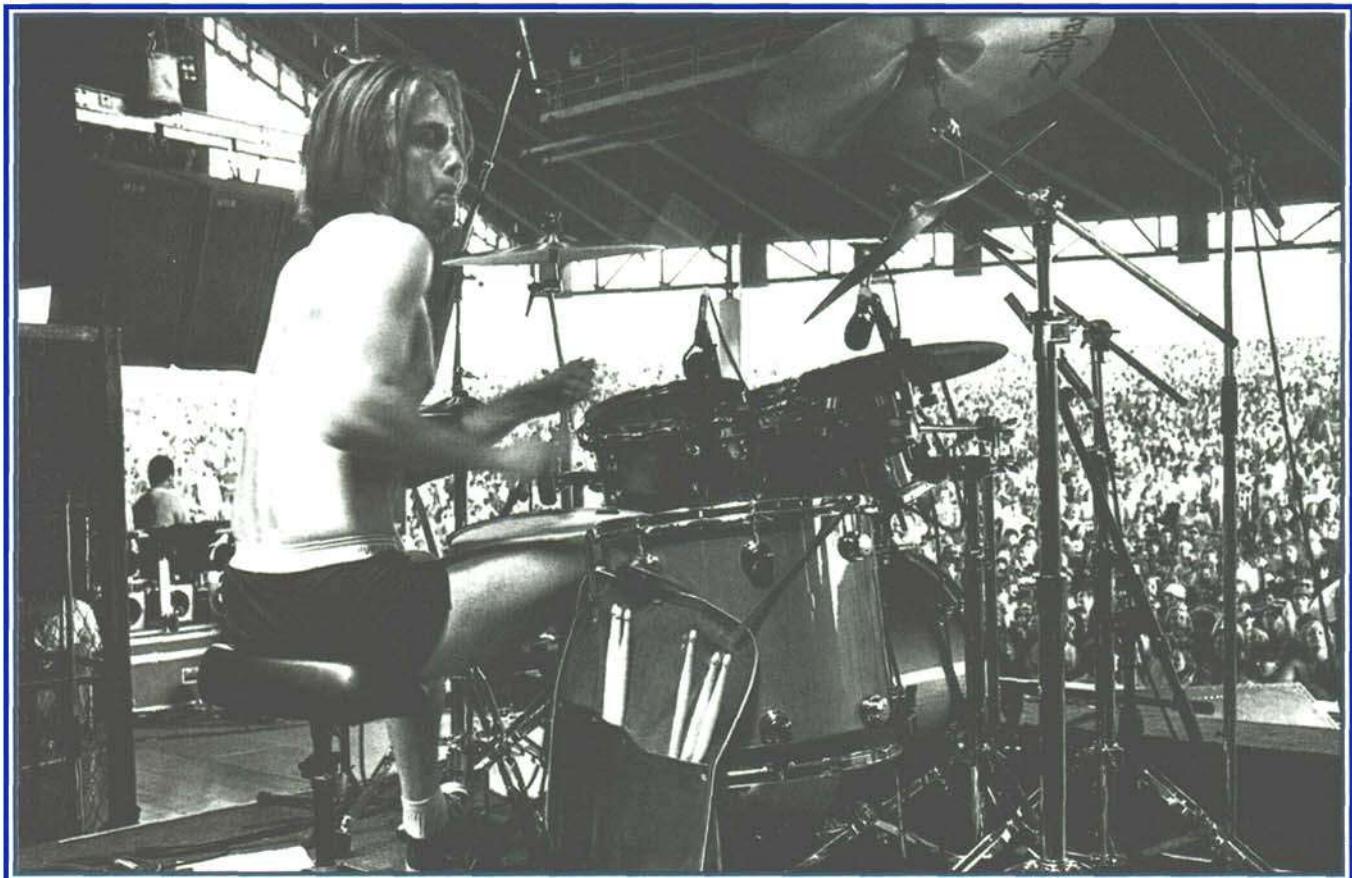


Photo by Lissa Wales

music like that to a degree, but the arrangements for the songs came more easily this time because they're more straight-ahead. They still rock, and that's the bottom line. That we're trying some different elements and sounds in our style shouldn't turn anybody away. It should draw people *in* and make them curious."

Cameron used a 20" kick drum as the foundation for his small kit, a 24" kick for his larger kit. Choice of snare drums and cymbals were often an at-the-moment impulse. "I was just trying to break out the strengths of each song and find sounds that fit," he explains. "Before we went into the studio, I only had a couple of songs figured out as to the type of sound I wanted. But as soon as I got in there and started experimenting, I got a somewhat clearer idea about which kits and drums to use on which song.

"I had both kits set up at all times. With the small one, I used a 12" Brady snare. I had some Ludwig and Gretsch drums, Ayottes, Yamahas—basically whatever sounded good—and some old cymbals my friend Gregg Keplinger loaned me. And I would also change the bass drum for certain songs. I called it my mutant kit, and it had a real washy sound. I was kind of going for that Ringo vibe. He had this ride cymbal that you just couldn't hear a 'ping' on. And then I used my standard-sized Drum Workshop kit for some other songs to get a deeper, solid, more dirty-groove foundation. And I used different snares and cymbals on that kit, too.

"Still, it was pretty much up to chance as to the exact drums that made it onto the final cut of a given song. I just liked having the options. The bottom line is, I got what I was looking for and I was satisfied with the final mixes. This is the first time that's really happened for me. The key is knowing how to get your instrument to sound right, knowing how to change those sounds when you need to, and knowing how to use

**'I'm disgusted  
that some newer  
bands have  
taken the wrong  
elements of  
grunge—the  
fashion side of it  
and the surface  
sound—but they  
don't have the  
essence, the  
heart of it.'**

the studio, which really comes from experience."

When recording for *Badmotorfinger* in 1991, Soundgarden went to the fabled Studio D in Sausalito, California, strictly to record the drum tracks. Cameron wanted to avoid special concessions for the latest session, though. "I wanted the drums to sound more earthy and natural, but I wanted to record them in a way that would make them very easy to mix. I didn't want to have to change the sounds in the mix, which happened with the last record. Gregg [Keplinger] was in the studio this time to help me out with things, changing heads and putting up cymbals. But one of the biggest things to me was that he would play the drums while I went into the control room and helped dial in the sounds. That saved a lot of time and kept me fresh when it was time to do a take.

"But the recording process was still pieced together," Cameron explains. "Making it work is just a matter of

*continued on page 53*

The diagram illustrates Matt Cameron's drum setup. It features a central blue rectangular area labeled 'F' containing two light blue circles labeled 'B' and 'C'. Surrounding this central area are six orange circles numbered 1 through 6. Circle 1 is located to the left of circle F, circles 2 and 3 are above circle F, circle 4 is to the right, circle 5 is below circle 4, and circle 6 is to the right of circle 5. Below the diagram, the title 'Matt's Setup' is printed in a large, bold, dark green font.

**Drumset: Drum Workshop**

- A. 5 x 14 Keplinger snare drum
- B. 8 x 12 tom
- C. 9 x 13 tom
- D. 12 x 14 tom
- E. 14 x 16 tom
- F. 16 x 24 bass drum

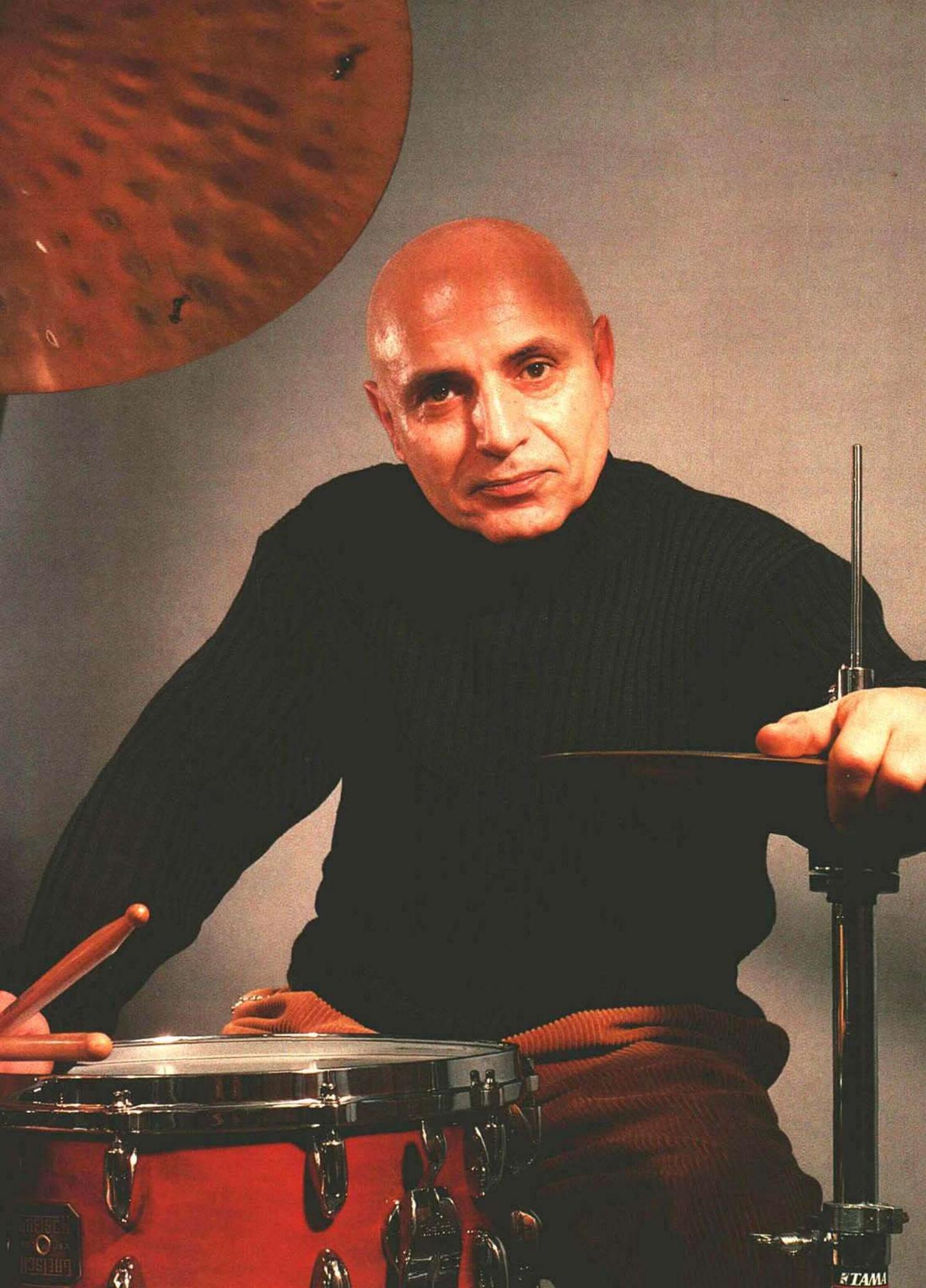
**Cymbals: Zildjian**

- 1. 15" New Beat hi-hats
- 2. 18" K crash/ride
- 3. 21" A medium ride
- 4. 17" A Rock crash
- 5. 20" A medium ride

**Heads:** Remo coated *Emperor* on snare, clear *Emperors* on tops of toms with clear *Diplomats* on bottoms, clear *Ambassador* on bass drum

**Hardware: DW**

**Sticks:** Vic Firth *American Classic 5B*



# Paul Motian

## Nice Work If You Can Get It

By Ken Micallef

Photos by Ebet Roberts

With a charismatic drumming style, countless albums as a leader, and profound musical associations with some of the most important jazz musicians both past and present, you'd expect Paul Motian to be known for what he is: one of the greatest jazz drummers of the past thirty-five years.

There's a lot of wisdom in that old Slingerland kit he plays. It's heard the misty melodicism-cum-cool jazz of the Bill Evans Trio, the remarkable early '60s group Motian played in alongside legendary bassist Scott LaFaro. And it's been pushed to new extremes of improvisation, first with Charlie Haden's Liberation Orchestra (1968), then with Keith Jarrett's groups of the '70s and '80s. (*The Survivor's Suite* and *Eyes Of The Heart* are standouts.) A Gretsch studio set did duty on Motian's solo albums (*Mysterioso*, *Jack Of Clubs*, *The Story Of Maryam*, and others), records that marked the shimmering (and at times shattering) impressionistic style of drumming and music that he continues to explore to this day.

With longtime collaborators saxophonist Joe Lovano and guitarist Bill Frisell, Motian's music can soar like a dove, enchant like a rainbow, or thrash like a gang of acetylene blowtorches. Their music-making on past efforts reached a new level on the albums *Paul Motian On Broadway Vols. I, II, and HI*, recordings of

standards that garnered rave reviews. The trio, along with saxophonist Lee Konitz and bassist Charlie Haden, turned old chestnuts like "I Got Rhythm" and "The Way You Look Tonight" into new animals that have little to do with the current correctness of "revisionist jazz."

But then Motian has never been too correct. Always searching for something different to play, he left the Evans trio when they were wildly popular. With his new Electric Bebop Band—a quintet of drums, bass, tenor saxophone, and two guitars (!) playing the bebop of Dizzy Gillespie, Tadd Dameron, and Charlie Parker—he's still delving into the unlikely.

As for Motian's drumming, it's a jumble of emotions. His warmth and quick sense of humor can result in esoteric, highly independent flashes of brilliance (Jarrett's *Survivor's Suite*), sweeps of gorgeous brash work (check any Evans album), chugging, salty swing reminiscent of Ben Riley and Sid Catlett (any of Motian's Soul Note albums), and what may be his trademark—those incredibly joyful, childlike drum solos. One part bashing, one part jazz, and the rest unbridled rhythm, they reveal the soul of someone who learned the rules forty years ago, only to throw them out after twenty. It's uncharted water for sure—just the way Paul Motian likes it.

**KM:** You know, you're one of the great unsung drummers of jazz.

**PM:** [laughs] Ha, ha, ha!

**KM:** Don't laugh, it's true. Your work with Bill Evans and Keith Jarrett, and now the quartet with Frisell and Lovano and Haden—that's some great jazz. But to many people, your music...

**PM:** ...is unknown, because it's not on a major record label. Nobody knew who Joe Lovano was till he signed with Blue Note. The cat played with

this music.

**KM:** You play differently with the Bebop Band than with Lovano and Frisell. A little tighter and straighter.

**PM:** Oh sure. It's a different kind of music—more straight-ahead. I just listened to some tapes from the last tour and it sounds really good. We played some blues that for a minute there got too straight-ahead for me.

**KM:** How do the jazz players of today compare with the players you came up with in the early '60s?

players coming up today will still be playing when they're sixty—or will they become record executives?

**KM:** Such as with Branford Marsalis, who wants to develop his acting career.

**PM:** That's what I'm talking about. But I don't mean to put him down. It's great that he can do it. Look at Quincy Jones. I remember when he was a trumpet player in Dizzy Gillespie's big band. Look at what he's done. But I don't have the ambition to be a record

## "I don't care about recognition. Somehow I'd rather be 'underground' than above ground."

me for twelve years and now he's a major star.

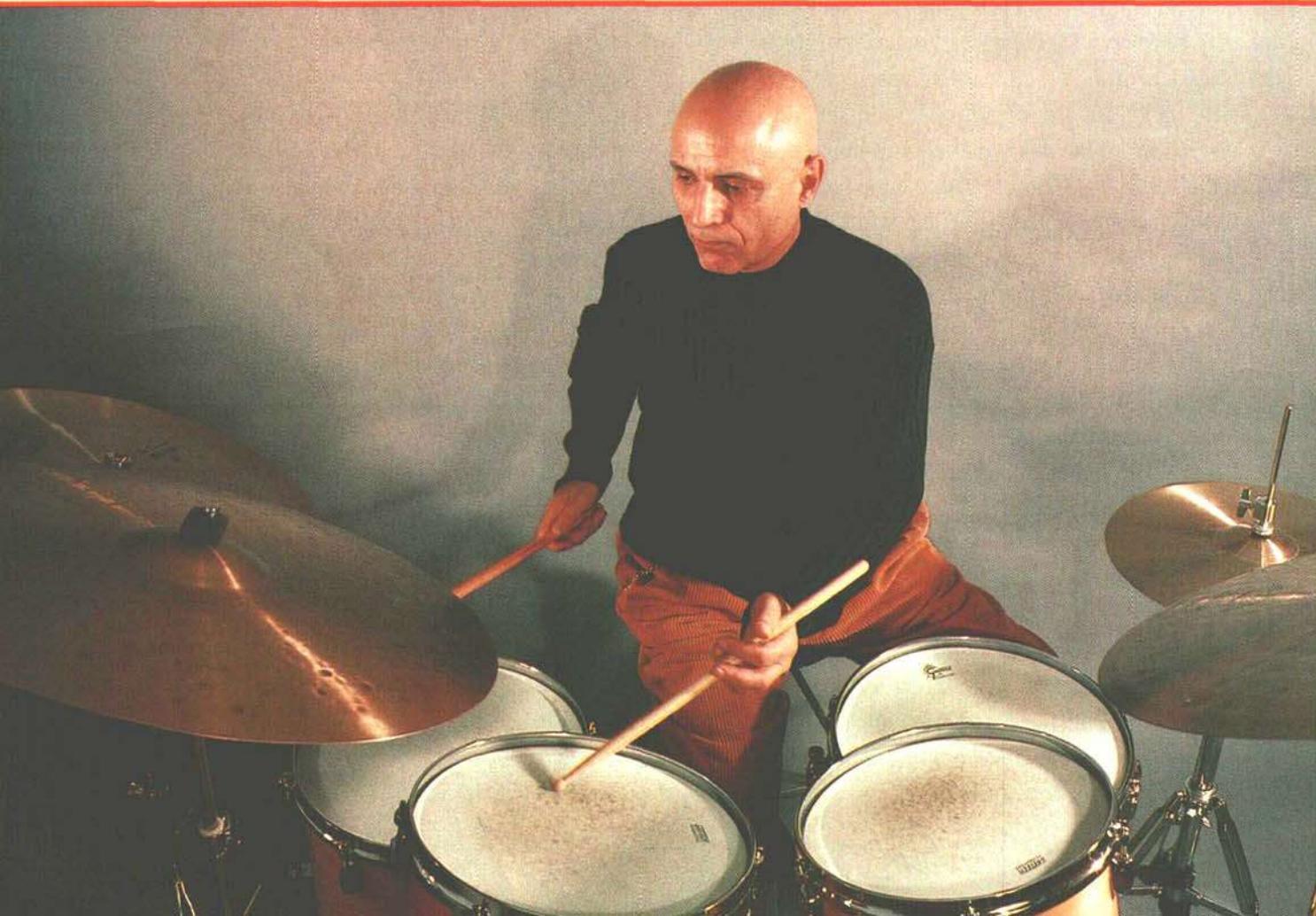
But it's also a visual, entertainment thing. Like hip-hop and rap: It's on TV all the time, that's what the kids want. That's what I wanted to do with the Electric Bebop Band by using two guitars. Maybe I can turn some kids on to this music. They should know about

**PM:** I was thinking about it this morning. I consider myself a *player*. And in some sense, I'm *only* a player. I respect and admire people who sustained themselves only as players throughout their lives. For instance, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, and Charlie Parker played until the end. I wonder if the younger

executive. I'm in that little corner with the players. I don't even want to go on television as a player.

**KM:** But that's one reason you're not more well-known and haven't received your due recognition.

**PM:** But I don't care about recognition. I'm not starving by any means. Somehow I'd rather be "underground"



# ***Portrait In Motian***

Of the many, many albums Paul Motian has played on, here are the ones he lists as containing his favorite performances:

**Bill Evans:** *Portraits In Jazz* (Riverside), *Trio '64* (Verve)

**Paul Motian:** *Conception Vessel* (ECM), *Mysterioso* (Soul Note)

**Keith Jarrett:** *Survivor's Suite* (ECM)

**Paul Bley Trio:** *The Paul Bley Trio* (Transheart)

**Frisell/Lovano/Motian:** *Trioism* (JMT)

**Geri Allen:** *Etudes* (Soul Note)

As far as the drummers most influential on Motian, he lists the following:

**Art Blakey** (leading his own Jazz Messengers, as well as with Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk)

**Philly Joe Jones** (with Miles Davis)

**Kenny Clarke** (with the Modern Jazz Quartet)

**Max Roach** (with his own quartet, with Clifford Brown, and with Bud Powell)

**Shadow Wilson** (with Count Basie)

than aboveground. If I was on a major label there'd probably be pressures. I'm free to do what I want now. When I want to record, I call JMT [Motian's label] to set it up and they say fine. I'm sure I wouldn't be able to do that with a major.

**KM:** So how did you come to New York in the late '50s?

**PM:** I came out of the Navy band. I was stationed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard from November 1953 to September 1954. After that I got a pad on the Lower East Side, on East 9th Street, and the rent was \$24 a month. I've been there ever since. I shared a toilet with the neighbors and the bathtub was in the kitchen.

**KM:** As you began making the rounds, who did you sit in with?

**PM:** I went to a place called Arthur's Tavern, where Charlie Parker used to leave his alto. There was another place called The Open Door, on the Upper East Side—just a lot of little joints. There was a lot of bebop around. I met Bill Evans at an audition in late 1954.

**KM:** Your playing with Bill Evans on those early records (*Portraits In Jazz* and *Trio '64*) sounds really different from the other drummers of that era. You had a very graceful and abstract approach.

**PM:** If you listen to records we both played on with Tony Scott, those are pretty straight records. The music started to change when Bill and I and Scott LaFaro got together. It's kind of an

evolutionary thing and kind of an accidental thing, the way the playing advanced. After a while I wanted to do anything to be different. Then the shit started to get *really* out. [laughs]

**KM:** Bill Evans was known for his sensitive, lyrical playing. That must have had an effect on you as well.

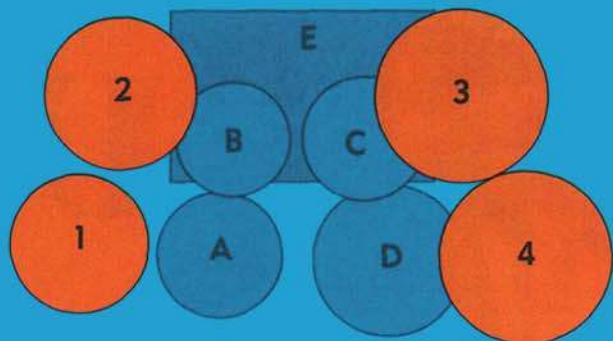
**PM:** He wasn't always like that—he could be pretty strong and straight-ahead, too, like on *Portraits In Jazz* and even earlier. I quit Evans in '64 because the music started to get wishy-washy. It turned into piano-bar music. I just couldn't dig it anymore. I was playing too soft, I never played with sticks. I just hated that shit.

**KM:** How long were you with Evans?

*continued on page 76*

**"The music started to change when Bill and I and Scott LaFaro got together. Then the shit started to get *really* out."**

## ***Paul's Kit***



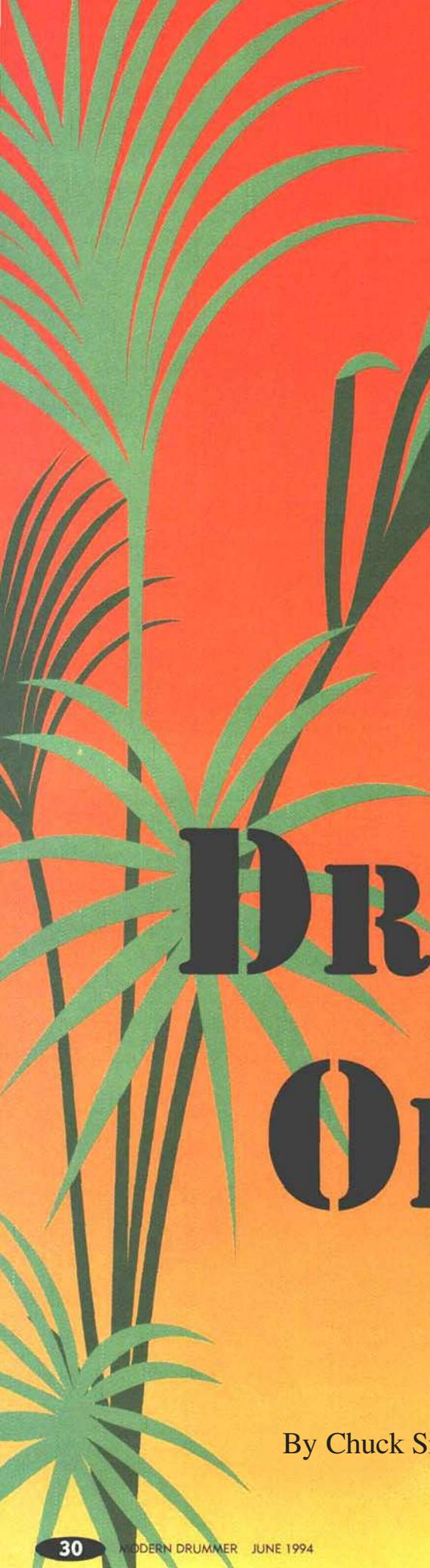
**Drumset:** Slingerland  
(although Paul will occasionally use his Gretsch kit in a similar configuration)  
A. 5 x 14 maple snare drum  
B. 8 x 12 tom  
C. 9x 13 tom  
D. 14 x 15 tom  
(or sometimes a 14 x 16)  
E. 14x20 bass drum

**Hardware:** Tama hi-hat stand, Pearl bass drum pedal

**Heads:** Remo coated *Ambassadors*

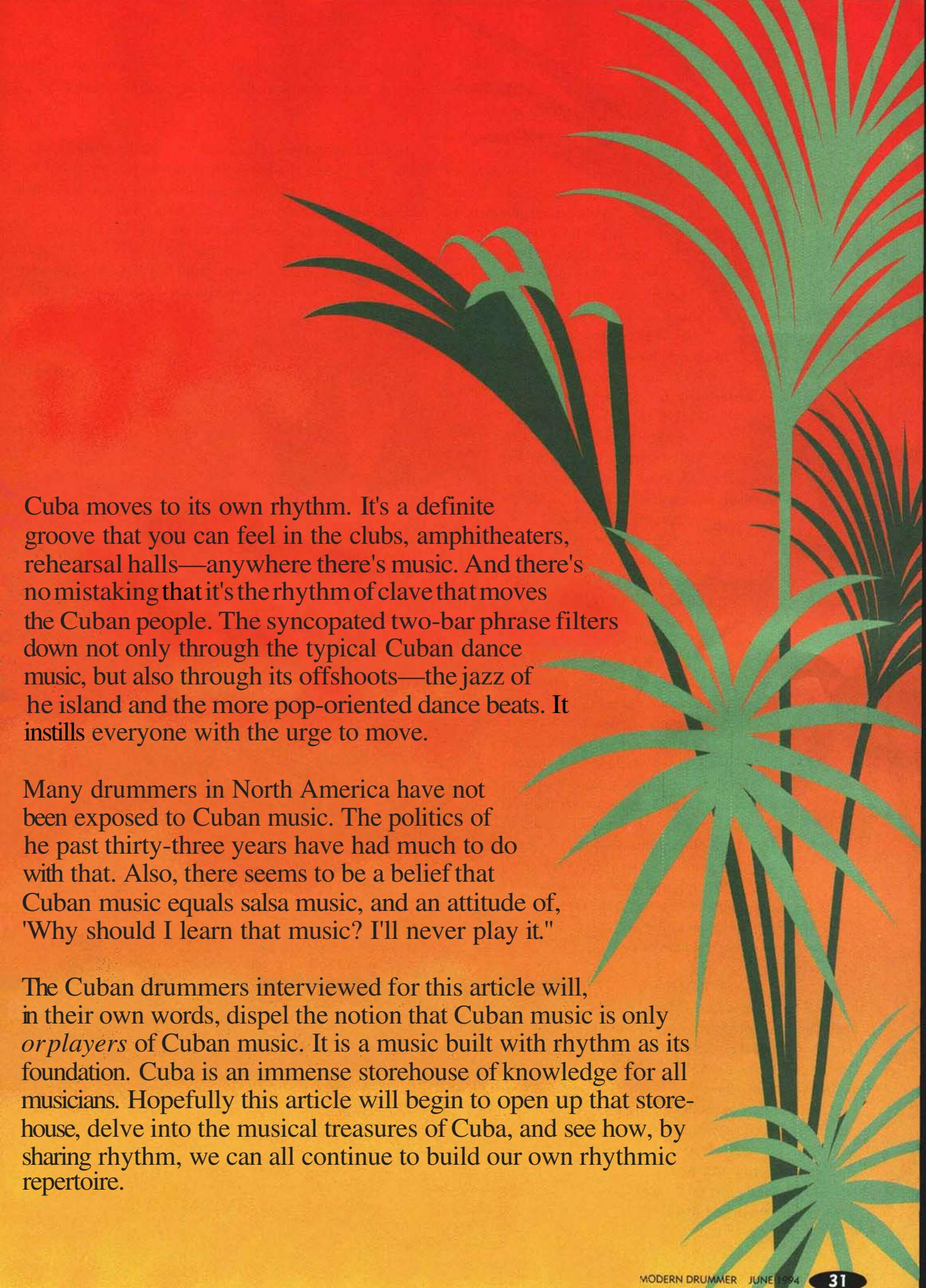
**Cymbals:** Paiste and Zildjian  
1. 15" hi-hats  
(Paiste on top with K Zildjian on bottom)  
2. 16" Zildjian crash  
3. 20" A Zildjian with rivets  
(or 22" Paiste 602 dark ride)  
4. 20" Paiste China-type

**Sticks:** Drummer's World 3A wood tip, Professional CC brushes



# THE DRUMMERS OF CUBA

By Chuck Silverman, Rebecca Mauleon-Santana, and Richie Garcia



Cuba moves to its own rhythm. It's a definite groove that you can feel in the clubs, amphitheaters, rehearsal halls—anywhere there's music. And there's no mistaking that it's the rhythm of clave that moves the Cuban people. The syncopated two-bar phrase filters down not only through the typical Cuban dance music, but also through its offshoots—the jazz of the island and the more pop-oriented dance beats. It instills everyone with the urge to move.

Many drummers in North America have not been exposed to Cuban music. The politics of the past thirty-three years have had much to do with that. Also, there seems to be a belief that Cuban music equals salsa music, and an attitude of, 'Why should I learn that music? I'll never play it.'

The Cuban drummers interviewed for this article will, in their own words, dispel the notion that Cuban music is only *orplayers* of Cuban music. It is a music built with rhythm as its foundation. Cuba is an immense storehouse of knowledge for all musicians. Hopefully this article will begin to open up that storehouse, delve into the musical treasures of Cuba, and see how, by sharing rhythm, we can all continue to build our own rhythmic repertoire.

include Giovanni Hidalgo, Luis Conte, Carol Steele, Ralph Izarry, Eddie Montalvo, Karl Perazzo, and Walfredo Reyes, Jr.

## Hector Salazar Frias

Hector Salazar Frias is the drummer with the group "Pablo Y Su Elite" (Pablo And His Elite). He is twenty-four years old and has been playing for seven years. His drumming prowess, though, far outshines his comparatively short playing time.

When we met Hector he was warming up for an outdoor gig in

Havana. While watching him warm up one wouldn't have noticed anything spectacular. He was calm and relaxed and was adjusting the elements of his drumset. Most Cuban drummers, like Hector, utilize a percussion setup in addition to their basic setup. Hector uses timbales on the hi-hat side, with cowbells placed all around the kit.

There were some problems with the PA (not an uncommon occurrence anywhere in Cuba), and as soon as that was settled, the band began and the whole place started shaking! The energy was amazing, and at the center was Hector, burning and churning out an incredible array of rhythms and grooves. Describing his playing as energetic is like saying that Tony Williams plays "kind of okay."

Hector displayed a stunning repertoire of percussive grooves, all in synchrony with the bass, percussion, and piano. As with all the other groups we saw, there was a constant intermeshing of rhythms that made the band swing *very hard*.

## Enrique Pla Garcia

Enrique Pla Garcia has been the main pulse of one of Cuba's most prolific and innovative groups, Irakere, since its beginnings in the early '70s.

As Irakere's repertoire is multi-dimensional—combining jazz, rock, samba, classical, and other international styles with Cuban popular and folkloric music—Pla has consistently proven to be a drummer's drummer by demonstrating his versatility.

From infectious dance numbers to complex musical suites (often incorporating odd meters and sudden tempo changes), Irakere has confidently relied on Pla's rock-solid and creative drumming, making them one of Cuba's most important groups and giving them worldwide acclaim.

## Julio Cesar Barreto

Barreto is the drummer with Gonzalo Rubalcava, one of Cuba's foremost pianist/composers. Julio exemplifies Cuban drumming in that he has incorporated the best of many worlds of percussion: He's as strong playing typical Cuban music as he is in the jazz

The ability to change and create new environments in which to grow has always been the mark of true genius. This is what's been accomplished by many of the drummers of Cuba. They recognize the need to change, the need to be different from what has come before. This underlying theme emerged from the drummers interviewed herein.

They spoke respectfully of the African roots of their music and how the inner feeling for those roots inspired them to find their own musical paths. None of these drummers sound at all similar musically, but each has the commonality of clave.

Cuban drumset playing has been in an era of creativity for quite some time. Unfortunately the North American public has not been made aware of its growth. After seeing Hector Salazar Frias, Jose Luis Quintana, Julio Cesar Barreto, Enrique Pla Garcia, Calixto Oviedo Mullens, and Girardo "Piloto" Barreto in action, it's easy to conclude that they are among the best drumset artists in the world. Each of these players burns—which is really no surprise when you consider that they live in a society so connected with drumming, with music—and with clave. The following brief biographies will give you an idea as to the contributions these drummers have made.

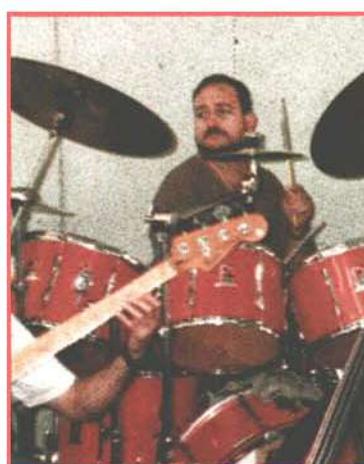
### Jose Luis Quintana

Jose Luis Quintana—better known as "Changuito"—is perhaps the most sought-after and imitated percussionist in Cuba. He is credited with revolutionizing Cuba's popular "songo" rhythm, and was a member of Cuba's popular group Los Van Van for over twenty-three years.

Recently Changuito left Los Van Van to pursue an independent career, as well as to teach internationally. His ultimate desire is to be able to visit the U.S. to share his music and his drumming talents with drummers and percussionists here. In his words, he wants simply to "help the hands of those who wish to study Cuban percussion." His stellar students



Jose Luis Quintana



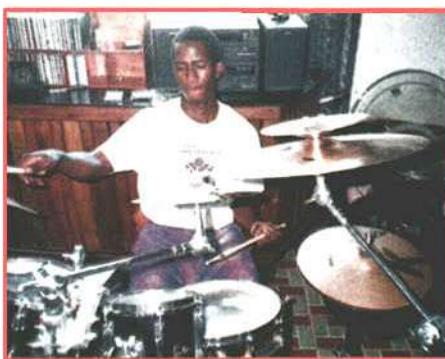
Enrique Pla Garcia

idiom. He's a young drummer, but he's well-studied and very accomplished. The best way to describe him is as a cross between Jack DeJohnette, Elvin Jones—and Cuba.

## Calixto Oviedo Mullens

To all salsa music lovers in the know about Cuban groups, the phrase "NG La Banda, la que manda" is right on the money. It means "NG, the band that commands." NG La Banda is an aggregation of some of Cuba's best musicians, and is undoubtedly the most popular band among the Cuban dance crowd. Their infectious grooves and refrains are a testament to Cuba's "nueva generacion" (new generation, the original name of the group). Despite recent changes in personnel, NG still swings hard, and their mixture of funky bass lines and amazingly fast, bebop-like horn lines is perfectly balanced by some of the most innovative percussion grooves ever.

Upon the departure of one of the group's key figures—



Julio Cesar Barreto



Calixto Oviedo Mullens



Pablo Menendez

## Deep Grooves

Here's a list of some of the greatest Cuban albums ever recorded. This is by no means a complete discography, but if you pick up a couple of these and listen well, you'll get a good idea of the feel of Cuban music. (Following the list are several sources for many of these albums.)

**Israel "Cachao" Lopez:** *Cuban Jam Session In Miniature* (Descarga), *Jam Session With Feeling*; **Carlos "Patato" Valdez & Juan Drake:** *Patato Y Totico*; **Los Papines:** *Bolero, Rumba, Guaguanco, Salsa*; **Los Van Van:** *Songo, Sandunguera*; **Irakere:** *Homenaje A Beny More*; **NG La Banda:** *En La Calle, Echale Limon*; **Orquesta Reve:** *Reve Y Su Charangon*; **Gonzalo Rubalcava:** *Giraldilla*; **various artists:** *El Jazz Cubano* (Blue Note/World Pacific Records), *Sabroso! (Havana Hits)* (Virgin Records); **Adalberto Alvarez Y Su Son:** *La Salsa Caliente*

**Tower Records**, Hollywood, CA; **Virgin Records**, Hollywood, CA; **Chuy Records**, Hollywood, CA; **Musica Latina**, Los Angeles, CA; **Record Mart**, New York, NY; **Axess Records** mail-order catalog, (818) 576-5606; **Descarga** mail-order catalog, (818) 377-2647 x25, (718) 693-2966

• *Silverman, Mauleon-Santana, Garcia*

drummer/arranger Girardo "Piloto" Barreto—NG wasted no time in hiring another outstanding drummer/percussionist: Calixto Oviedo Mullens. Calixto, a founding member of Adalberto Alvarez' group, has also worked with Opus 13, Pachito Alonso, Conjunto Rumbavana, and, briefly, trumpeter Arturo Sandoval. He is in every sense of the word a complete drummer/percussionist, equally proficient on traps and Cuban percussion. His ten-year-old son Yulien is quickly following in his father's footsteps: When Calixto is not on the road with NG, he and his amazing son are "working out" at home.

## Girardo "Piloto" Barreto

Girardo Barreto is the nephew of the late, great Cuban percussionist Guillermo Barreto. Girardo is the perfect drummer to carry on his legacy. "Piloto" (the pilot) was the drummer with NG La Banda. Check him out on their disc *En La Calle*. At the time of this interview he was in a new band featuring the previous singer of NG.

Piloto's playing is impressive, but what also needs to be noted is that many of his band's intricate arrangements were written by him. Before the interview, we were treated to a rehearsal for an upcoming gig. Piloto has a total command of the drums. Like so many other drummers in Cuba, his versatility is apparent, from typical Cuban rhythms to positively slammin' backbeats.

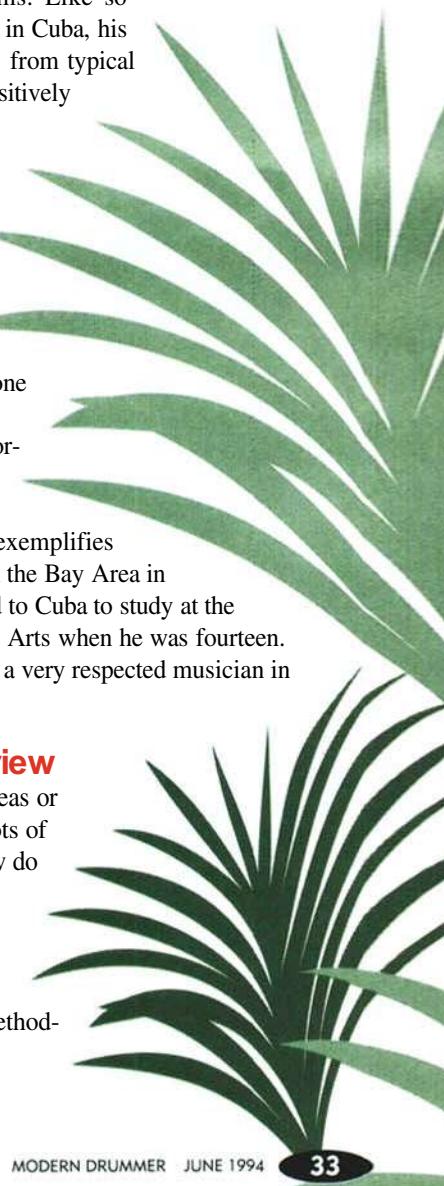
## Pablo Menendez

Menendez is the leader of the very popular Cuban band Mezcla. This band is one of that rare breed of musical groups that borrows extensively from many different cultures. Perhaps this exemplifies Pablo. He comes from the Bay Area in California, and moved to Cuba to study at the National School of the Arts when he was fourteen. He stayed, and is now a very respected musician in Cuba.

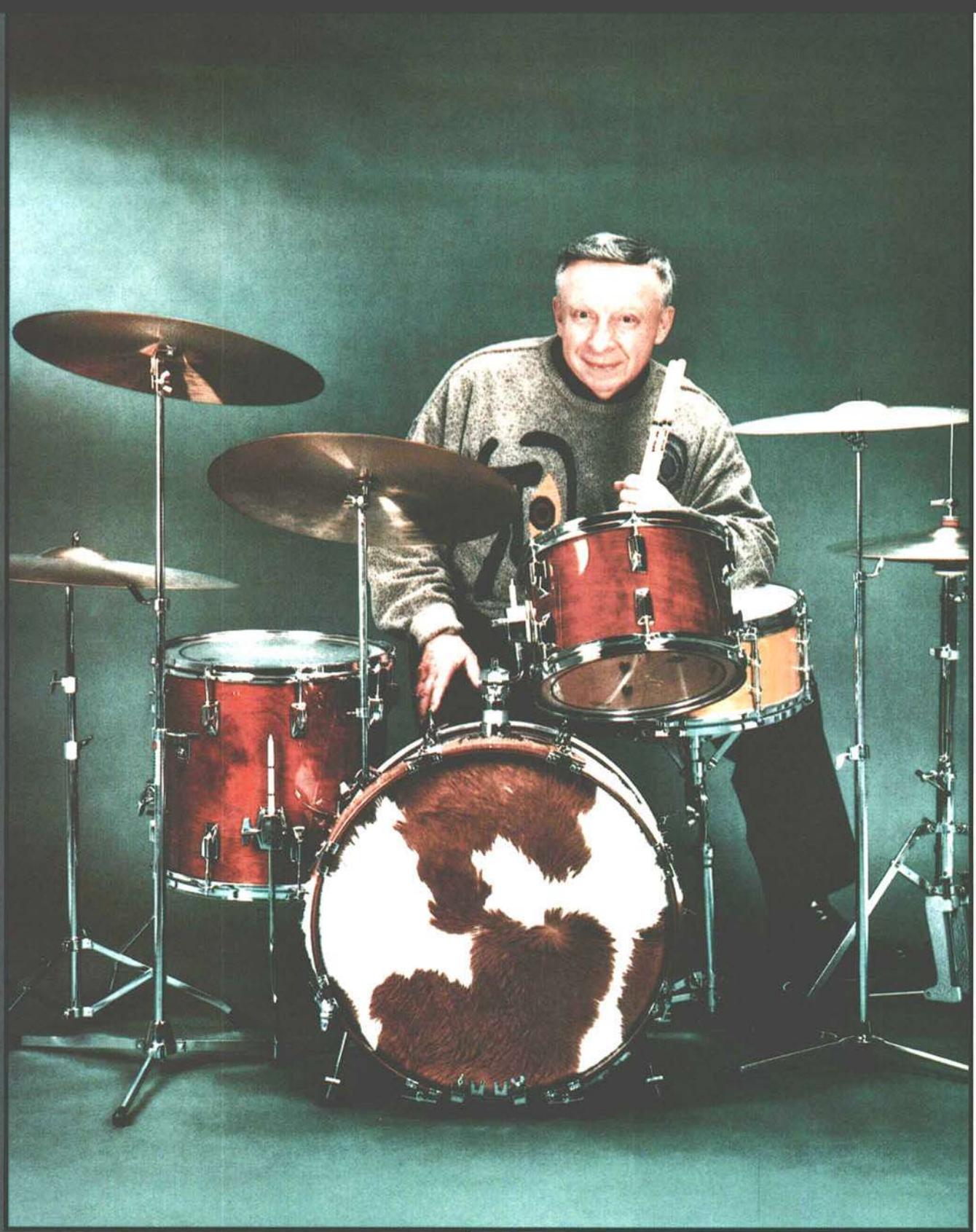
## The Interview

**MD:** What are your ideas or concepts about the roots of Cuban music, and how do you apply them to the drumset?

**Mullens:** Besides being an organic process—and not a method—continued on page 87



# HERB BROCHSTEIN:





# THE PRO BEHIND PRO-MARK

Like all consumers, drummers like to know that the person behind a product they use identifies with them. It's one thing to appreciate an

item for its own intrinsic value, it's another to know that the person manufacturing it once had to buy the same product for his own use.

As part of his fifty-four-year career in the music industry, Herb Brochstein has over thirty-five years as a professional drummer to his credit—including work in live performance, television, and commercial recording. He's also been a drummer, a drum shop owner, and a full-line music retailer. Today, he is the president of Pro-mark, arguably the world's largest manufacturer of drumsticks and related percussion products. You may not be familiar with Herb, because his products don't bear his name—a result of his unassuming personality. As he puts it, "Basically, I'm a low-profile guy. I don't need to see my name in lights." But the success of Pro-Mark products is directly attributable to Herb Brochstein's lifelong dedication to music, along with his experience as a drummer and drum retailer.

Herb was born in a Model-T Ford in front of St. Joseph's hospital in Houston, Texas. His interest in drumming began at the age of twelve, and he experienced the insecurities of a musician's life early on—when he was fired from a teenage band because he didn't have a bass drum in his drumset. "I was fourteen at the time," he recalls, "and I was just crushed. But shortly thereafter my mother bought me a bass drum and a \$2 brass cymbal. The war was on then, and most of the real drummers were serving in the armed forces. So I started getting calls to play—for money! And all the guys

in that little teenage band eventually worked for me in my own band."

"People told me I was great," says Herb, "and I believed them—which was one of the first mistakes I made. I didn't really have any formal drum education; I'd just listen to records and try to watch as many people as I could. Some of the musicians I worked with would tell me what a good drummer should do, in terms of timekeeping, phrasing, and dynamics. It was then that I really understood that I should get on the stick if I was going to improve. I had been reading about the Bobby Christian School of Percussion in Downbeat Magazine. I enrolled in the school, and got on a train for Chicago."

Herb worked as a busboy in a cafeteria in the daytime, and took lessons at Bobby Christian's school in the evening. Within a few weeks he was teaching beginners and managing the studio when Bobby wasn't there. After two years, Herb returned to Houston and resumed his playing career. But he also took a cue from Bobby Christian and opened his own Houston School of Music to pursue another personal pleasure: teaching.

The operation of his school led Herb into the retail music business. While his teaching and playing career flourished, the retail store was growing quickly. He learned to deal

with competition from other stores, and in doing so, established a reputation as an honest dealer with a sincere interest in his customers. Those customers could relate to Herb as a dealer, because they knew he was also a professional player himself.

## Herb and Elvis

Herb has one recollection about his early career as a music dealer that few can match. One day in 1954, a friend told him about a young singer who was performing around Pasadena, Texas and causing quite a sensation. His name was Elvis Presley. "I had the mistaken impression that Elvis was just another country singer and guitar player. That style of music didn't interest me because I was a jazz player. But a few months later I looked out the front window of my store one day and saw a pink Cadillac drive up. That's when Elvis, his drummer, D.J. Fontana, his guitarist, Scotty Moore, and bassist Bill Black came into the store to buy a new drumset. They didn't like any that I had on display, but they did like my own personal set of Gretsch drums—which happened to have a calfskin front head on the bass drum with the hair still on. So I sold them that set—and didn't think anything more about it.

"A few months later," Herb says, shaking his head, "I saw a write-up in Life magazine about Elvis's appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, and there was a two-page photo spread showing Elvis in front of D.J. Fontana playing my set of drums! By then Elvis was a star—and maybe my drums helped him to reach that point just a little bit!"

## The Beginning of Pro-Mark

Herb was still operating his retail shop when he got involved with drumsticks. "I was still playing," he says, "getting most of the first calls for any shows that came to town and a lot of the TV work and commercials done locally. I had bought six pairs of Japanese-made drumsticks from a passing salesman perhaps a year earlier. I didn't remember who I'd bought them from, and I didn't know what kind of wood they were made from. All I knew was that they were finished much nicer than domestic sticks: The ends were rounded, the sticks were straighter, and so on."

"One night I filled in with a local rehearsal band. A very good touring drummer was passing through Houston and sat in. At the time, the thing for drummers was getting a very defined, high-pitched ping out of your cymbals—and I knew my cymbals sounded great. So when this visiting drummer played I went out front to listen. My cymbals sounded muffled—like they had a handkerchief over them! They were nowhere near as bright and defined as they sounded up close when I played them. At the end of the set I picked up the sticks that the other drummer had been playing with and hit the cymbal. It sounded dull. I looked at the stick, and it was a domestic hickory stick. The guy had rummaged in my trap case and chosen those sticks to play with, because they were more comfortable for him. Then I picked up my Japanese sticks and hit the cymbal one time—and I got that bright ping I was used to hearing. I said to myself, 'I don't know what kind of wood this is, but I like it.'

Herb spent the next four months trying to locate the source of those sticks, to no avail. Then he received a circular from a Japanese trading company asking if he was interested in buying guitars or ukuleles. "I wrote them back saying that I wasn't interested in those things," says Herb, "but I was looking for the source of the Japanese drumsticks. The guy wrote me a nice letter back asking for a sample and offering to try to locate the source for me.

Six or seven weeks later, the stick factory was located. Their



THE YOUNG "HERBIE" BROCHSTEIN

THOUGHT HIMSELF QUITE A DRUMMING HOTSHOT IN THE LATE 1940S.

minimum order was 1,200 pairs, so I invited three local music stores to share the order with me. They refused, so I ordered the 1,200 pairs. "By the way," interjects Herb, proudly, "the man from the Japanese trading company who wrote me that first letter all those years ago is Tat Kosaka. And we've been together now almost thirty-seven years on a handshake."

Herb realized that if he was going to sell his own line of sticks, he needed a brand name. He chose "Pro-Mark," meaning "the mark of a professional." Coincidentally, it also combined the nicknames of his two daughters: "Pro" and Marka. He started selling the sticks to his students, and to traveling drummers passing through Houston. He soon started getting calls from all over the country—including one from the legendary Billy Gladstone. "Billy ordered some 2Bs," Herb recalls, "and I got my first formal letter of endorsement from him. Of course, I didn't know what an endorsement was in those days; it was just nice to get the framed letter and picture he sent me."

The physical designs of the original Japanese sticks were not suitable for the U.S. market. So Herb would send the factory various American-made models, along with his own instructions. "I'd say, 'This is the general idea, but I want it to be a little thinner here, or longer there...'" he explains. "In a few weeks they'd send some samples. If they weren't right the first time, I'd comment some more, and usually within two tries they'd have it. That's how I designed my sticks. Of course, they kept very detailed drawings of the end results."

## Herb The Manufacturer

When Herb made his first trip to Japan to see the "drumstick factory," he met with a startling revelation. "I was picturing a big building with smokestacks," he recalls. "But we drove into a residential neighborhood and went into the front room of a house no bigger than my office today—with lots of sawdust and wood chips piled high. Two guys were in there using hand tools to shape each stick! And the sticks they made with hand tools were actually more consistent than the American production being made in the late '50s on lathes."

It was that hand-made quality that got Pro-Mark sticks off the ground. Herb says, "The product itself was what put Pro-Mark on the map. It wasn't endorsers, it wasn't discounts, and it certainly wasn't aggressive salesmanship. I didn't have any idea what to do or how to do it."

When Herb launched Pro-Mark as a full-time business in 1968, he knew he had a good product to sell. "At that time, the typical warpage on American-made sticks was so high, the average drummer would refuse to buy them. But the warpage on my Japanese sticks was under 2%. When I sold my retail store in '68, there were some ten-year-old sticks of a discontinued model on the shelves, and they were still straight as an arrow."

However, no matter how good Pro-Mark's oak sticks were, many drummers still preferred the feel of hickory, and Herb couldn't afford to ignore this sizable market. So he established his own manufacturing facility in Houston in 1981.

### Drummer Contributions

Herb Brochstein's years as a professional drummer have given him a strong sense of advocacy for the drum-product consumer. This philosophy led him to establish the industry's first and only toll-free hotline in 1990—originally a six-month commitment that has now lasted over three years. "Years ago," says Herb, "if a drummer was dissatisfied with a product or had a problem, there really was nowhere to go to correct it. There weren't toll-free numbers then. With our hotline, we're able to direct individuals who are having trouble finding the Pro-Mark products that they want to sources in their area. We also have the opportunity to field occasional complaints and to satisfy those customers' needs. Sometimes we'll hear that a dealer has told a customer that we don't make a certain model anymore; we can either confirm or correct that. Other callers just ask for advice. I took a call personally one time from a young drummer asking how he could find a good drum teacher.

"We get lots of calls asking for our catalog," Herb continues. "It's very important that that catalog leaves the same day."

As a drummer himself, Herb knows that drummers often have extremely innovative ideas. As a result, Pro-Mark makes it a point to invite their suggestions. "And you don't have to be a big-name drummer for us to listen to you," he stresses. "For example, our Hot-Rods were invented by a drummer who has the patent on them and makes them for us by hand. They've been very successful."

Pro-Mark also listens to outside opinions when it comes to developing an idea. "I don't rely on myself," Herb says. "I always ask for input from drummers. That's the reason we established our 'Project X' trial group for product-testing purposes. One ad in Modern Drummer magazine generated over 3,000 responses from people who wanted to be involved. We send them products, and they send us their responses. It's a tremendous way for us to communicate directly with our market and to benefit from that communication."

### The Pro Behind Pro-Mark

"Every day there's a new 'class' entering into drumming," says Herb. "And for those who love it, have the talent for it, and think they can go somewhere with it, it's important that they listen to some of the 'old pros.' Little secrets of the trade can make a big difference in their sound or their performance. Being a drummer lets me be conversant with problems of equipment, touring, and all the things that apply—no matter what the time frame. I may not be able to show you a certain rock lick that Fred Frith is playing

on a given recording, but if you're trying to expand your overall knowledge about drums and drumming, I think I have something to offer.

"I try to channel my experience into the creation of drumstick designs," Herb continues. "It also gives me a common language with which to talk to drummers who have their own design ideas. As a direct result of that, I feel that Pro-Mark has contributed over the years rather significantly to improve the tools for drummers. I know that we raised the standards when we first came out. I like to think that we were pioneers in our field."

### Pro-Mark Today

The pioneering spirit that has guided Herb Brochstein from the inception of Pro-Mark is still very much in place today. In its continuing expansion program, the company has budgeted a significant sum for new, custom-designed machinery. In addition, lengthy consultations with wood experts have led to a new production process called Millennium II, now in use in their Texas factory. The Japanese factory is also employing innovative methods



HERB AND ED SHAUGHNESSY "TRADING FOURES" DURING A CONCERT WITH THE HOUSTON JAZZ ORCHESTRA FEBRUARY, 1994.

to improve the quality of Pro-Mark's oak sticks. These developments have given Pro-Mark the confidence to offer a written guarantee of stick performance and customer satisfaction.

### Once A Drummer...

One reward of a successful business is the opportunity to get away from it occasionally. Says Herb, "I hear things on the radio or TV—music I'd like to be a part of—and I miss it. I don't play enough. Fortunately, I've gotten more calls to work this year than I have in the past fifteen. I'm even thinking of putting my own big band back together."

Not surprisingly, Herb concludes, "Of course, I'll have to woodshed for sure! If I'm going to do it, I want to do it well."

# Slingerland Artist Series Drumkit

by Rick Mattingly

## This kit offers compact and affordable drums and a quality jazz sound.

The sound of a musical instrument can defy logic. Obviously, some of the appeal of an instrument's sound is simply in the "ear of the beholder." But as any acoustical engineer can tell you, things that should sound good sometimes don't, and things that shouldn't sometimes do.

I've come to feel that way about drums. Over the past few years I've reviewed kits that, in terms of manufacture, were absolutely flawless. Some of them sounded quite good, but others only sounded adequate, with no particular warmth or character. Then there are kits like the Slingerland *Artist Custom* kit I received for this review. It didn't have any of the features that we have come to accept as being crucial. The shells were merely 5-ply, and those plies weren't even all the same kind of wood. Not only were there no suspension mounts for the toms, but the tom arms extended pretty far into the shells. One of the bearing edges had rough spots. The tension casings were not mounted at nodal points or isolated from the shells. Hell, the poor little snare drum had sixteen lugs screwed onto it with two screws each, and it even had an *internal muffler*.

But the kit sounded great. Go figure.

### The Drums

For review we received a "jazz kit" consisting of a 14x18 bass drum, 8x10 and 8x12 rack toms, a 14x14 floor tom, and a 4x14 snare drum. The kit looked very much like a Slingerland kit from twenty years ago, with the same oval logo badge (each with a serial number), hoops that curved inward rather than outward, and traditional Slingerland tension casings. But there have also been some changes made since the brand was reactivated a few years back.

One difference is the shells themselves. Old Slingerland drums had reinforcement rings, while the new shells do not. The shells on *Artist Custom* drums feature North American maple interior and exterior plies with three mahogany plies in between. Other than the fact that the maple comes from the U.S., the drums are manufactured totally in Taiwan. The shells on our review kit were finished in a dark walnut stain that was polished to a high gloss. The kit was beautiful.

Rims on the toms and snare drum are the traditional Slingerland "Stick Saver" design, which means that the top flange curves inward rather than outward, as on most drum hoops. Because the

top of the hoop has a rounded edge rather than a sharp one, it's supposed to be easier on your sticks when you're playing rimshots. But be careful if you find yourself tempted to run your finger around the inside of one of these hoops. I did, and was rewarded with a metal splinter in my finger. In fact, practically every hoop on the review kit had a rough spot on it where the hoop had been welded together. I can't say that it hurt the sound, but the company needs to spend more time literally smoothing off the rough edges.

Lugs on all the drums were the vintage Slingerland design, but the bass drum spurs were a modern, heavy-duty design and the rack tom mounts were the old Pearl style that extend into the drums. The tom arms had memory collars on each end allowing the drums to be positioned exactly the same way each time. Wingnuts on the spurs, tom mounts, and floor-tom legs had large "butterfly" ears that made for easy tightening and loosening.

Eighteen-inch bass drums are an acquired taste—but one that I acquired many years ago, so I found this drum to be a delight. It came equipped with white coated medium heads front and back, each with a felt strip. Right out of the box it sounded pretty good, with a dry, punchy sound and just a bit of ring. I then tried something I've been doing for years with my own 18" bass drum: I put both felt strips across the inside of the back head and left the front head wide open, with nothing inside the drum. The sound was exactly what I wanted. All of that muffling on the back head provided plenty of punch from the beater for sambas and bossa novas, while that open front head (which I tuned as low as possible without getting a flappy sound) gave me a reasonably good bottom end. Having nothing in the drum gave the sound some resonance, but since the drum was so small and the felt strips across the back head kept the sound from bouncing back and forth, the tone was round without being boomy. (I've tried this same procedure on 20" and 22" bass drums without much success. It only seems to work on an 18" drum.)

All of which brings us to an important point. My own 18" bass drum is a Slingerland from the late '60s. Differences in manufacture aside, how did they compare in sound? They were very close, but I have to admit that the new one sounded a little bit warmer and fuller than mine.

The same was true of the tom-toms. The 12" and 14" drums seemed to have a bit more body than my own Slingerland toms. (My kit doesn't have a 10" tom, so I couldn't compare the new one against an old one.) The three toms sounded very good together, allowing me to get three distinct, graduated pitches that sounded equally resonant. Because of the small diameters of the toms, I tuned each one to the lower end of its optimum range. The 10" drum still provided me with a pretty high pitch, while the 14" floor tom offered plenty of bottom.

When I ran my finger along the bearing edge on one of the tom shells, I could feel a rough spot. It wasn't serious enough to cause any problems tuning the head, however. Plastic heads can compensate for minor flaws in a bearing edge, but you might want to check each drum before you purchase it to make sure that any rough spots are minor. Hopefully, the rough spot I found was a fluke; all the other bearing edges on the review kit felt quite smooth.

The 4x14 snare drum has quite a lot of metal on it by virtue of the sixteen separate lug casings (eight for each head). The casings are mounted in pairs, in opposite directions. Of course, the drum also is fitted with a snare strainer (a vintage Slingerland *Zoomatic* that is very simple but does the job) and a butt plate. The snare unit has sixteen spiral snares, and the shell has two air vents (each with a logo badge). The drum also has a device I haven't seen on a modern drum in quite a while: an internal tone control. This is a knob that, when tightened, shoves a thick piece of round felt up against the bottom of the batter head.

The drum had a very dark sound that favored lower overtones—even when the heads were cranked up reasonably tight. Some might call the sound "muddy," but I found it perfect for the type of snare-drum comping one might do in a jazz setting. Rimshots added enough crack to the sound for funk or rock beats. The shallow depth of the drum gave it good snare response even at soft dynamics, and also kept the drum from ever sounding overpowering. Basically, it was the kind of snare drum that would blend in with a band's sound rather than cut through it. I can think of a lot of situations where this drum would *not* be appropriate, but it would be perfect for the kind of gig on which I would want to use an 18" bass drum.

The Slingerland *Artist Custom* drum package (without stands) as reviewed above carries a list price of \$1,375, which is extremely reasonable for the sound and general quality of the drums. Yes, there were some manufacturing flaws, but the sound was excellent and very much in the Slingerland small-jazz-kit tradition. Heavy rock drummers or loud fusion players will have little use for a drumset like this, but for acoustic jazz settings or general club-date use, the kit would be ideal.

### Hardware

The *Artist Series* kit can be purchased without hardware (except, of course, for tom mounts, floor tom legs, and spurs) or with one of several hardware packages. For review, we received the 3000 series, which is Slingerland's top line.

Given the diminutive dimensions of the drums in this particular kit, the heavy-duty, double-braced 3000 hardware seemed a bit out of proportion. The legs on the two cymbal stands each measure 18" long and have a 29" spread when fully extended—which should keep them standing through just about anything. The straight stand has a maximum height of 5' 6", while the boom stand will allow you to mount a cymbal nearly 6' from the floor (with the boom in a vertical position). The boom arm itself will



extend 18" past the center of the stand, which was more than enough to get a cymbal up and over the toms on this kit. The boom arm also has a large, heavy counterweight that should balance just about any ride cymbal. There are memory locks for each section of the stands, and wingnuts have the same butterfly ears as on the tom mounts. Individual list price for the S3263 cymbal stand is \$78, while the S3266 boom stand is \$85.

The S3262 snare drum stand also features double-braced legs and was quite sturdy. At the stand's lowest height, the batter head of the 4" snare drum was 23" from the floor. (You could get it a little bit lower by removing the memory collar.) By extending the stand all the way, the drum could be raised about 7". List price is \$75.

Slingerland's S3238 bass drum pedal is based on the classic Gretsch/Camco/DW design with cam action and a single spring. The hinged footboard is larger than the ones on the above-mentioned pedals, though, giving it a more heavy-duty feel—as did the double-chain drive. The footplate has a toe-stop that I found helpful for heel-up playing. Two sprung spurs can be engaged to prevent bass drum creep. The pedal was smooth and quiet, and the tension could be easily adjusted from very light to moderately heavy. The S3238 lists for \$68.

The S3264 hi-hat stand features a footplate identical to that of the bass drum pedal, and also has a pair of sprung spurs. It only has a single chain for the pedal linkage, but that chain is as thick

as the double chain on the bass drum pedal. There's no adjustment for the spring tension, but its medium resistance should work for most players, and it was smooth and quiet. The upper rod is hex-shaped, which seemed to help in securing the clutch screw against it. The hi-hat stand has the same double-braced legs, butterfly wingnuts, and memory collar as are on the cymbal stands. It lists for \$100.

While I do question whether someone using a kit with such small drums would elect to use such heavy-duty hardware with it, I don't question the quality of the 3000 series stands and pedals. The SH3200 hardware package reviewed above (bass drum pedal, hi-hat stand, snare drum stand, straight cymbal stand, and cymbal boom stand) retails for \$400. It's nice to know you can still get quality for a reasonable price.

## Vic Firth Emil Richards Collection

by Rick Mattingly

Top L.A. studio percussionist Emil Richards is known for his extensive collection of instruments and sound effects. Now he has designed a series of specialty mallets and beaters that are being manufactured by Vic Firth.

The *ER1 Back Beat Clapper* is a large wooden instrument with a handle and a cylinder that has a large slit cut into it. Soundwise, its high-pitched crack falls somewhere between an orchestral slapstick and a pair of castanets. *ER1s* are sold in pairs so that you can strike them against each other for maximum volume. Of course, you can play one by itself by striking it against your hand or leg. While devices like this would generally fall into the "hand percussion" classification, drumset players might have fun striking one against their upper leg with one hand while playing the rest of the kit with their other limbs. The *ER1* is not an especially loud instrument, so the sound could get lost in high-volume situations. On the other hand, its high pitch gives it the ability to cut through more than you might think. List price per pair is \$39.90.

The *ER2 Timp-Maraca* sticks were my personal favorite of the bunch, and the ones that would have the most applications for drumset players. They consist of a pair of timpani sticks that have maracas inside the heads. When played on tom-toms they produce the deep tom sound you would expect when playing with soft timpani mallets, but they also produce a high-end maraca sound duplicating the tom rhythms. These would be great for African-type effects or even for rumba beats on dance jobs. The mallets can also be effective when played on bongos or congas. List price per pair is \$29.

The *ER3 Rattle Mallets* are similar to the *Timp-Maraca* sticks—they consist of a combination yarn mallet and maraca—but drummers might not find them quite as user-friendly. Designed primarily for vibraphone or marimba playing, they have the customary thin handles found on those types of mallets—which some drummers might find uncomfortable. (Having spent a certain portion of my life trying to be a vibes player, I'm quite used to the feel of mallets such as these, so I enjoyed fooling around with them on a drumset.)



Top to bottom, the ER1, ER2, ER4, and ER3

I tried some of the same kind of playing that I did with the *Timp-Maraca* stick and found that the *Rattle Mallets* had a little less shaker sound, but produced a sharper, more defined sound on the toms. I also tried riding on a closed hi-hat with the *Rattle Mallets* and got a good blend of shaker and hi-hat that would be perfect for a soft bossa nova. (I had tried the same thing with the *Timp-Maraca* mallets, but the soft felt head produced virtually no sound whatsoever on the hi-hat.) I also got some interesting effects rolling on cymbals with these mallets. List price per pair is \$25.

The *ER4 Slap Mallets* produced a soft—but very articulate—sound on toms, but were somewhat awkward to use for fast playing. They employ the same narrow handles as the *Rattle Mallets*, but feature synthetic sheepskin beater heads, which are large and flat. As a result, you have to strike at a very precise angle. Still, I can't think of anything else that would produce the exact same sound, and for certain tom-tom effects they might be perfect. List price per pair is \$34.

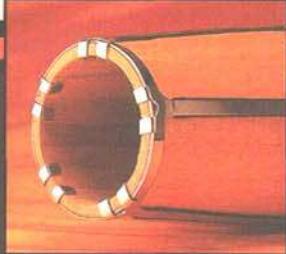
Although Emil Richards' unique mallets and beaters are not intended specifically for drumset use, they do offer some interesting alternatives for sound production. If you're looking for that "something different" in your drum and cymbal sounds, check 'em out.



## The heat's on the street...

the world's on fire with the passion and soul of percussion. Now, that fire burns even stronger as Meinl's incredible Livesound conga line makes its street debut here in America.

Meinl congas sound hotter because of their superior craftsmanship, better quality heads and a shape that produces a warmer, more powerful sound. Also, Livesound Floatune congas are fitted with a patented



Meinl's Floatune system.  
No shell penetrating or  
dampening hardware.



TMC heavy duty  
adjustable stand  
fits any size conga.



Meinl's 8" and 9" Congitas add  
new range to the conga family.

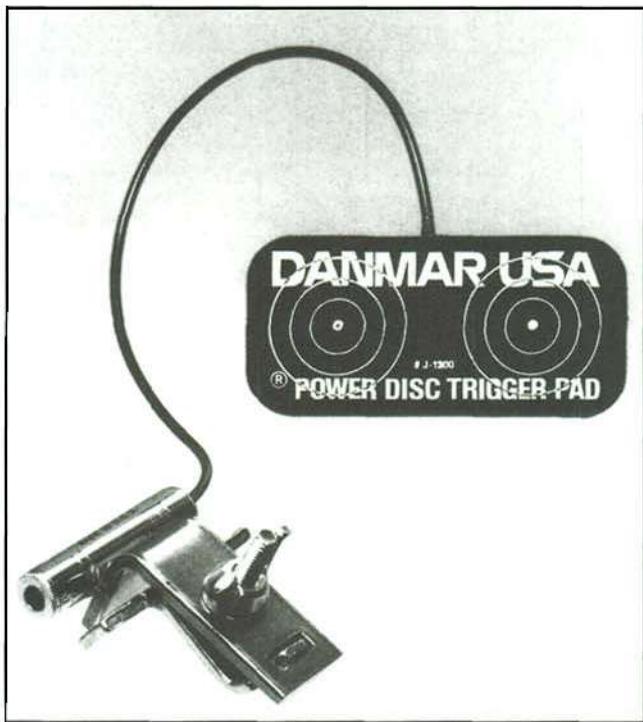
isolated tuning system that requires no drilling or shell-dampening hardware. So Floatune congas provide exceptional resonance and response.

The Floatune tuning system is also available on Meinl's unique 8" and 9" Congitas and the petite yet powerful Tonga, innovative drums that add new voices to the conga family.

And whether it's street, stage or studio, congas of any size or brand will set up easier with Meinl's sturdy TMC height-adjustable stand.

For more information on Meinl Percussion, send \$3.00 to: Tama Drums, dept. MDMP35, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020 • P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls ID 83401.

## Danmar Power Disc Trigger Pad



According to Danmar, their new model *J-1200 Power Disc Trigger Pad* is the first acoustic bass drum trigger that can be struck directly, which virtually eliminates the problem of false triggering. The trigger can be used either electronically or acoustically with a single or double kick drum pedal. **Danmar, 7618 Woodman Ave., Ste. 11, Van Nuys, CA 91402, tel: (818) 787-3444, fax: (818) 786-7358.**

## Kit Caddi

The *Kit Caddi*, from Knight Designs, is a dolly designed to haul all of a drummer's equipment in one load. This is achieved by the use of a shelf-like upper deck to hold the drums and a special lower deck to house the hardware (up to ten heavy-duty stands). The *Kit Caddi* weighs only 28 lbs., but is claimed by the manufacturer to be extremely durable and able to accommodate loads of up to 300 lbs. It is constructed of 1" square steel with a hard powder-coat finish, with rubber decking to protect hardware, drums, and cases. A foldable handle makes the unit compact for storage in tight places (such as car trunks). The *Kit Caddi* comes with a tie-down strap to provide extra stability for the load when negotiating potholes, steps, cracks, etc. For more information, contact **Knight Designs, 342 South Cochran Ave., Ste. 402, Los Angeles, CA 90036, (213) 525-1058.**

## Mini-Trap Plus

The A&S Case company's *Mini-Trap Plus* is a multi-purpose case that can accommodate snare drums, stands, percussion instruments, cymbals up to 16" in diameter, foot pedals, drum machines, and a variety of other items. The case features an adjustable divider and a top lid, is made from lightweight fiber, plastic, or "ozite lite flight" materials, measures 16"x16"x10", and retails for under eighty dollars. **Pro Music Outlet, 425 W. Silsby, Springfield, MO 65807, (417) 887-3888, 886-0972.**

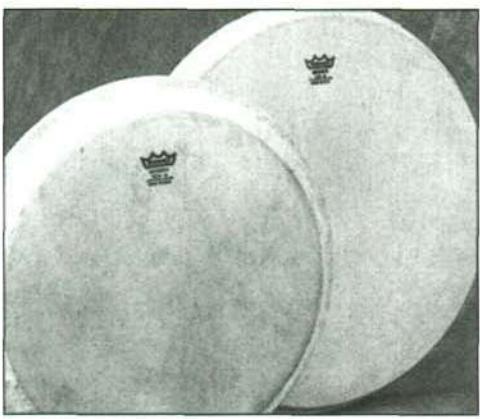
## StudioS Drumhead Overlays

*StudioS Drumhead Overlays* are thin pieces of material that lie on top of snare drum batter heads, designed to enable drummers to "tune" and "tone" snares without a drum key. They come in various shapes and thicknesses to emulate different "voices," like brash, country, rock, or marching band. An accessory called *Paws* can make effects like sand blocks and shakers possible without interfering with playing technique. *StudioS* are held in place with long-lasting, re-positionable, double-stick tape. **StudioS, 4340 S. 300 W., Ste. G, Salt Lake City, UT 84107, (801) 488-1031.**

## Wuhan Dynasty I Cymbals

Wuhan has introduced their new line of cast, hand-hammered *Dynasty I* ride, crash, and hi-hat cymbals, made from B-20 alloy. **PR Percussion, 1507 Mission St., South Pasadena, CA 91030, tel: (818) 441-2484, fax: (818) 441-6686.**

## Remo Mondo Percussion Heads



Remo's new *Mondo* heads are available as standard on Remo percussion instruments, and as replacement heads for a variety of instruments. The new heads, which are made with *Legacy/Mylar* and *Acusticon*

technologies, were designed to be durable and inexpensive. They are available in light (resembling goatskin) and heavy (resembling muleskin) weights. **Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer Street, North Hollywood, CA 91605, (818) 983-2600.**

## New Pro-Mark Stick Bags And Ratchet



Pro-Mark has recently introduced several new stick bags, including the *JSB-6 Deluxe Jumbo Stick And Mallet Bag* and a line of premium leather bags. The *JSB-6* is made from a heavy-duty *Cordura-type* material, features a padded shoulder strap, a rugged zipper, a tool pocket, and elastic floor-tom straps with non-marring hooks. The line of leather bags comes in three color combinations.

Pro-Mark's new *Kwik Key* ratchet was designed specifically for fast head removal, and is ideal for the high-torque requirements of marching drums. **Pro-Mark Corp., 10707 Craighead Dr., Houston, TX 77025-5899, (800) 233-5250.**

## Noonan Custom Drums

The Noonan company now offers a series of hand-made custom drums that feature shells measuring 7mm under head size, "allowing the head to seat itself onto the bearing edge at its flattest and most even part," according to the makers.

Shells are available in over twenty types of exotic woods, are constructed of twenty-four 12.5mm staves, and feature 45° bearing edges, though shell thickness and edge angle can be made to customer specs. Tube lugs are turned by hand from high-grade solid brass, which can then be polished and lacquered or plated with chrome, copper, nickel, silver, gold, or any combination. Choice of rim type, bass drum spurs, tom mounts, throw-offs, and finishes are also available, and shells come in many sizes. **Noonan Custom Drums, 34A Harmer St., Gravesend, Kent DA12 1AX, England.**

## Club70 Patch Editor And Librarian

Symphonic Divisions' *Club 70* program is a patch editor and librarian designed specifically for Yamaha's *DTS 70* drum trigger system. It runs on Atari's *ST/Mega/TT/Falcon* line of computers in either monochrome or color video modes, and contains several features that assist the management, editing, and creative process of using the *DTS 70* for percussion as well as keyboards. The program enables users to edit two banks at the same time and to cut, copy, paste, and swap patches between them. It also enables total control of editing Performance and Chain patches with a mouse or keyboard, and offers several components that enhance the *DTS 70*. **Symphonic Divisions, 10552 14th NW, Seattle, WA 98177.**

## Concept 1 Trigger Pad



Concept 1 trigger pads fit snugly inside the rims of batter heads, greatly muffling acoustic head ring. The pads are made of five plies of synthetic compound, which, according to the makers, makes the pads respond and feel like acoustic heads. The system requires no holes to drill or mounts to attach. A kick drum pad mounting system holds the pad firmly in place, yet can be removed without damage to the head. Pads are available individually or in sets of five.

Concept 1 is also introducing their *Six-Pak* trigger pad system, which incorporates six touch-sensitive pads into one modular case that fits on any cymbal stand. **KMC Music Distribution and Manufacturing, P.O. Box 139, Decorah, IA 52101, (800) 369-9633.**

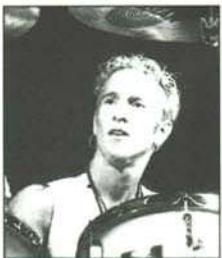
## Sibernized / Trueline Drumsticks

In addition to manufacturing and marketing Trueline drumsticks, the Sibernized company is introducing their own line of traditional hickory sticks featuring a diamond-shaped grip that allows for enhanced grip without loss of balance. **Sibernized Drumsticks, 140 S. Camino Seco, St. 423, Tucson, AZ 85710, (602) 721-9221.**



# Alternative Fills

by Mark Schulman



MUSIC KEY



As musicians we are constantly trying to express ourselves in our own way. We copy our musical mentors in an effort to reproduce what we love listening to, and then we try to apply it to our own musical situations—and hopefully add something new to the legacy!

The drum fill is our way to really put our signature on a song. As we expand our vocabulary and get into trying new things, we sometimes forget the purpose of what we're doing. The drum fill has the musical purpose of ending one phrase and setting up the next one—for example, playing a fill on the last bar of the verse or "B" section and going directly into the chorus. By playing the fill, we confirm the end of one section and create some musical tension or excitement to explode or release into the next section. The key to making this transition effective is to be musical. In other words, play something that is *best for the music!*

The challenge for most of us is expressing our musical abilities and vocabularies in such a way that fulfills us while still supporting the music. We want to keep the groove flowing and play something that doesn't disrupt the music, yet that displays a little piece of our heart and soul.

I've come up with some fills that are fluid and musical but that are a challenging alternative to predictable fills. Initially these fills involve incorporating the hands with the right foot. With the addition of flams and compounds, you can vary them up. Practice them slowly and evenly with a metronome and then gradually work up the tempos.

Enjoy 'em, change 'em, twist 'em, contort 'em—but remember, always do what's best for the music!

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Compounds

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Mark Schulman is the drummer with Foreigner.



# BOZZIO

TERRY

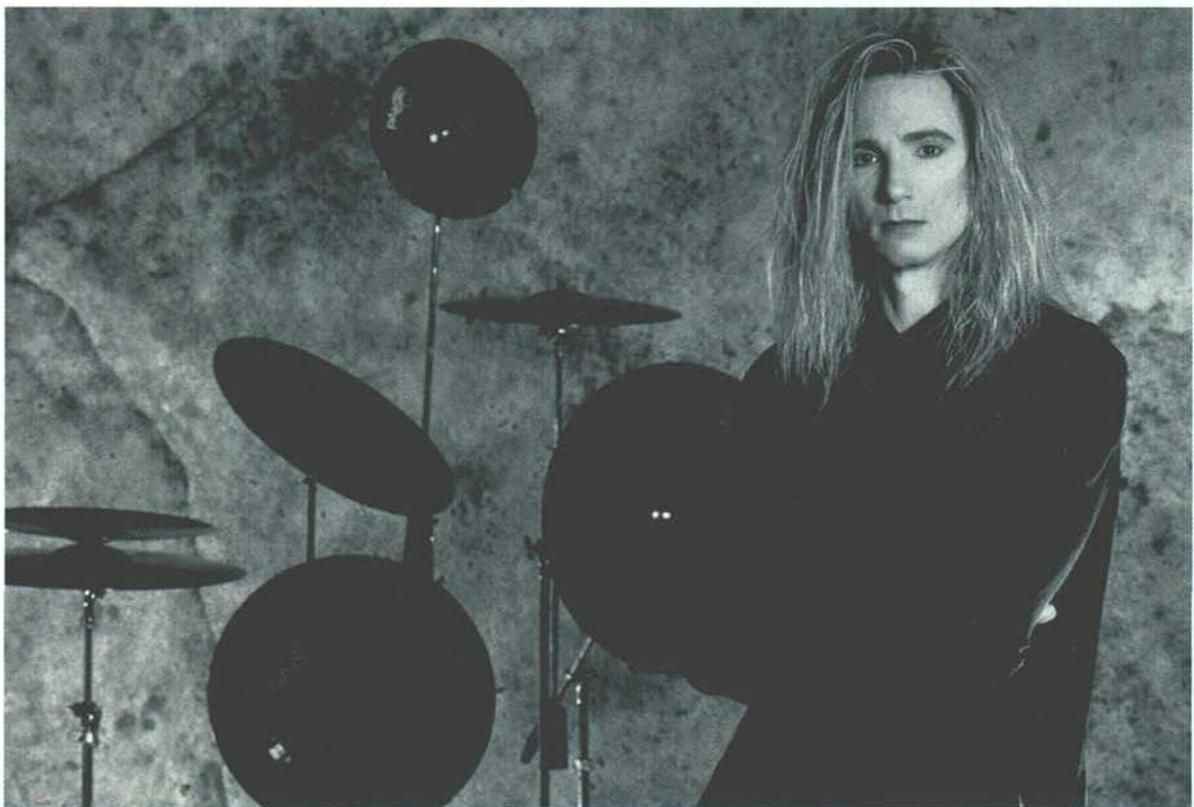
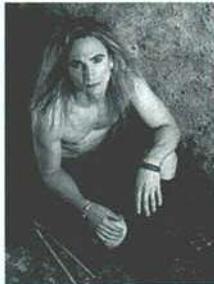
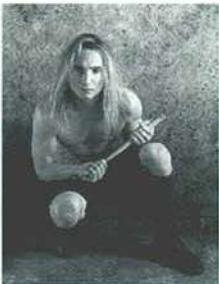
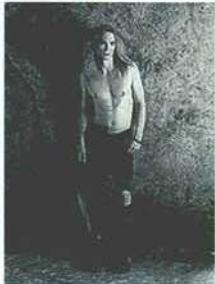
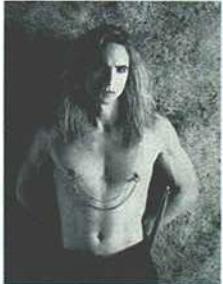


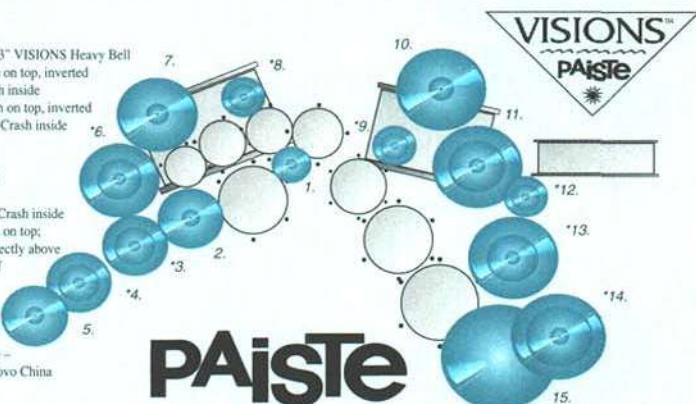
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- 1) 8" VISIONS Mini Hi-Hats
- 2) 13" VISIONS Full Hi-Hats
- \*3) 8" VISIONS Cup Chime, inverted, on top of 13" VISIONS Heavy Bell
- \*4) 14" VISIONS Crash with 8" VISIONS Splash on top, inverted
- 5) 14" VISIONS China with 12" VISIONS Splash inside
- \*6) 18" VISIONS Crash with 10" VISIONS Splash on top, inverted
- 7) 18" VISIONS China with 15" VISIONS Thin Crash inside
- \*8) 5" VISIONS Cup Chime, inverted, on top of 8" VISIONS Heavy Bell
- 9) 6.5" VISIONS Cup Chime, inverted, on top of 10" VISIONS Heavy Bell
- 10) 20" VISIONS China with 18" VISIONS Thin Crash inside
- \*11) 20" VISIONS Crash with 20" VISIONS China on top; with 14" VISIONS Heavy Hi-Hat mounted directly above
- \*12) 7.5" VISIONS Cup Chime, inverted, on top of 12" VISIONS Heavy Bell
- \*13) 20" VISIONS Crash with 12" VISIONS Splash on top, inverted
- \*14) 16" VISIONS Thin China with 14" VISIONS Thin Crash inside, and mounted directly above –
- 20" VISIONS Full Ride with 20" VISIONS Novo China sitting on top
- \*15) 26" SOUND CREATION #3 "Earth Gong"

(\*: Separated by felt)



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JOEY KRAMER OF AEROSMITH & DRUM WORKSHOP DRUMS

continued from page 6

keen timing, but who still lack the sound that enables a drum to speak out clearly and give the drummer full credit. Mr. Watson's article should help such drummers to create and project their own sound.

Brad Shoemaker  
Albany, GA

**CAROL KAYE**

I'm writing to thank Mary Stobie for the excellent article on one of the studio greats, bassist Carol Kaye [A Different View, March '94 MD]. I'd like to see more articles of this nature in the future.

Jerome Abraham  
Atwater, CA

**CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE**

In his article "Gene Krupa: A Tribute" in your March '94 issue, Steve Dunfey neglected to credit a significant source for a number of his direct quotations. Authors Bruce Crowther, Burt Korall, Richard Cook, Milford Graves, and Gunther Schuller were credited. However, statements by Louie Bellson and Steve Allen taken directly from the dialog I wrote for *Gene Krupa: Jazz Legend* (a one-hour video retrospective currently in international release via DCI Video / CPP Belwin, Inc.) were not. This is a serious matter, and I believe an apology is in order.

Bruce H. Klauber, D., Mus.

Author: *World Of Gene Krupa*  
(Pathfinder Publishing)

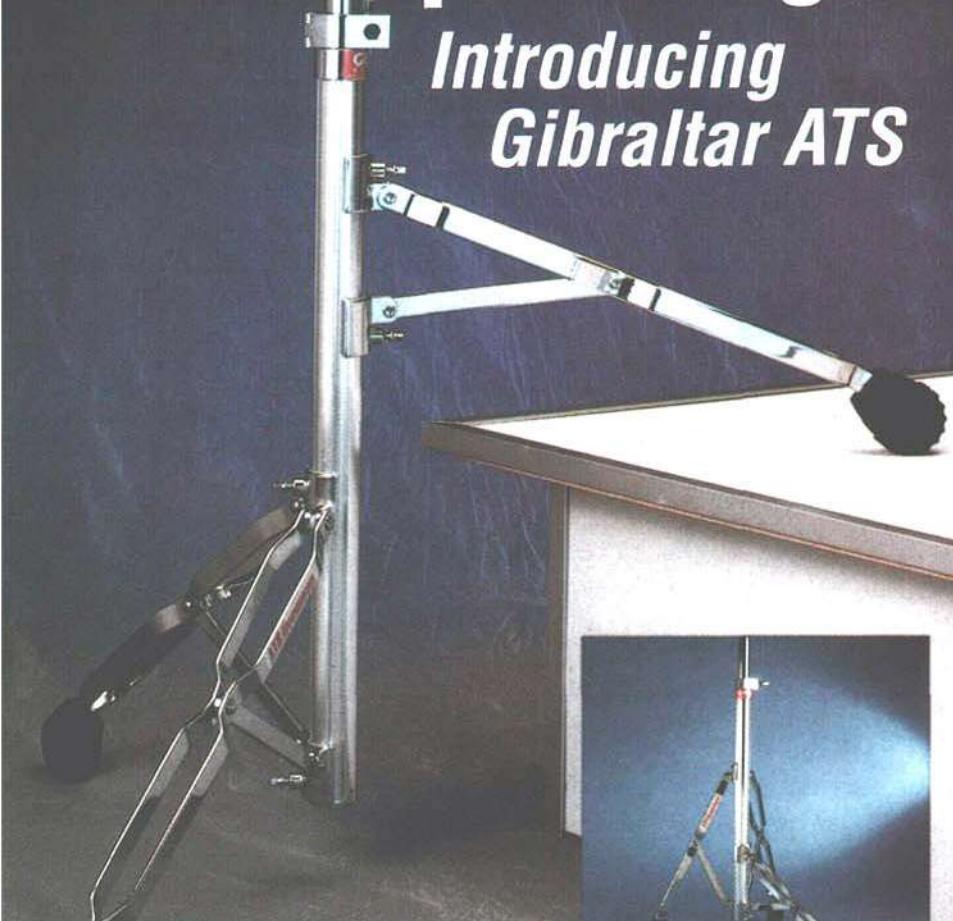
Producer/Writer: *Gene Krupa: Jazz Legend*  
(DCI Music Video)  
Philadelphia, PA

*Editor's note:* MD does apologize for the omission, which occurred at the editing stage.



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**ATS** MAY Advanced Tripod System

Randall L. May U.S. Patent 5,072,910 Foreign Patents Pending

**KAMAN**

# The Gretsch Gladstone Snare Drum

by Harry Cangany

At New York City's world-famous Radio City Music Hall, Buddy Rich once heard the drum roll performed by Billy Gladstone and remarked that no one played it better. Gladstone was almost a fixture at Radio City; before that he was at the Capitol Theater. In the 1920s New York was synonymous with music: Carnegie Hall, Cafe Society, Harlem, and more clubs than could be mentioned in this article.

Besides his talent as a musician, Billy was also an inventor. He had fifteen patents recorded by 1939. He sold the Ludwigs the patent to his practice pad—a weighted black rubber disc in the middle of a 14" circular pad that created a vacuum to keep it on the snare head. In the 1939 Gretsch catalog, Gladstone displayed a remote hi-hat. But the crowning glory of his inventions was his snare drum. Billy played in an orchestra pit—a crowded and dark little area. This was during the era of calfskin heads, and humidity greatly affected the sound and playability of a snare drum. Billy invented a drum that could be tuned without being lifted from its stand. The Gretsch Gladstone 3-Way Tension system was designed so that the player could tune the top head, the bottom head, or both by using a special key that attached conveniently to the side of the drum. In 1939 this drum cost \$110, which was big money in those days. At an average of 6% price increase/inflation, that same price today would be almost \$2,600. (Billy also designed a less-expensive 2-Way Tension model.)

The accompanying photo shows a 3-Way Gretsch Gladstone in oriental pearl (the Gretsch name for white marine pearl). This drum came to me from the collection of Chet Falzerano, the premier collector of Gretsch Gladstones and the later-made Billy Gladstones. (The second model came out after Billy's formal affiliation with Gretsch ended.)

After the break Billy continued to buy shells and parts from Gretsch in order to make his own drums for friends. When Billy made the drums, he would not allow them to be covered with pearl. He felt that it was wrong to cover a musical instrument with the same material used to cover toilet seats.

The Gretsch Gladstone that Chet sold me belonged to Joe Sinai, a famous San Francisco drummer who had been a Ludwig & Ludwig player. Like Billy Gladstone, Sinai was a theater drummer (from the RKO Golden Gate Theater), and I'm sure the appeal of easier tuning caught his eye and ear. Chet did change



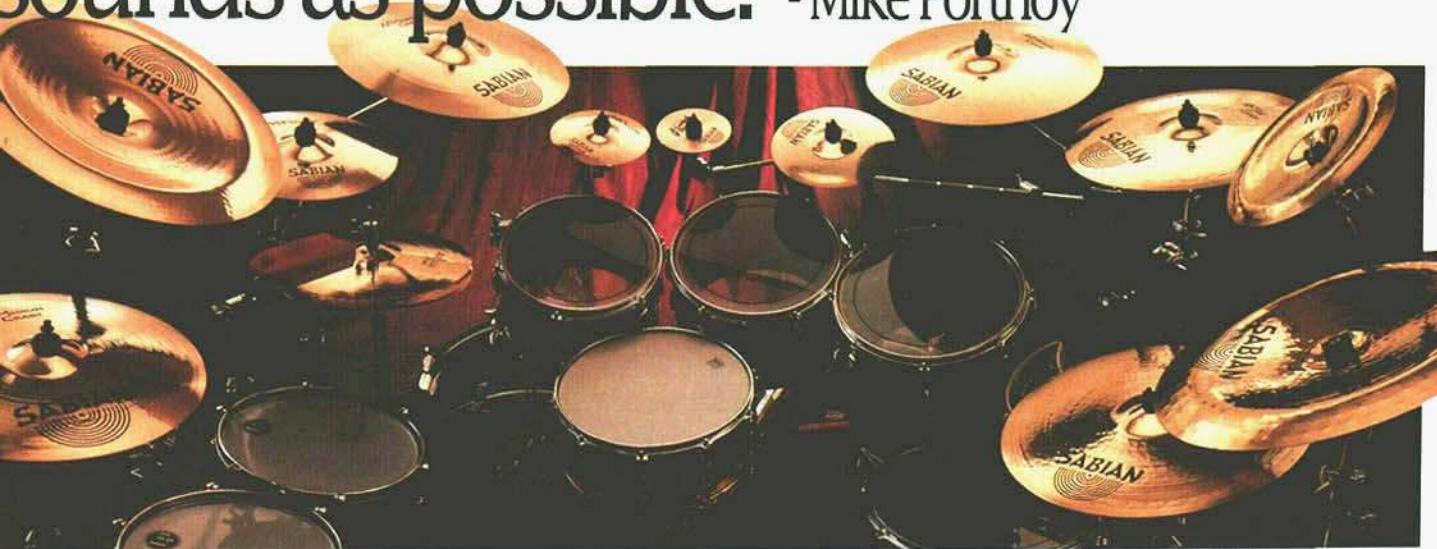
one item on the drum: Gladstone invented a special muffler designed to permit gradual adjustment between very soft and very loud overtones. The adjustment is tricky and tends to break. Chet replaced it with a regular Gretsch muffler.

The Gretsch Gladstone snare drum is a rare item, as are the Gretsch Gladstone toms and basses played by Chick Webb and other famous endorsers. If you should ever see tom-toms with offset tube lugs—in other words, where the bottom row does not sit under the top row, but is off to the side—odds are, you are looking at Gladstones. I once heard that there are around one hundred Gretsch Gladstone snare drums in existence, and perhaps fifty regular Gladstones, with fewer than fifty sets made. So each one is a museum piece and a real collectable. The lugs are tube-style, with a center post (later used for the earliest *Max Roach* piccolos). The hoops are engraved and the throw-off is a massive lever with a center tightening screw. The regular Gladstones also have a name plate of the original owner. (Today a replica Gladstone is made in New York by Lang Percussion.)

The lowest price you should expect to pay for a Gretsch Gladstone is probably \$1,200 - \$1,500. The high end should be around \$2,000. For those lucky enough to find a Billy (or regular) Gladstone, expect to pay 20 - 40% more. Check with your local drum store on the availability and cost of the Gladstone replica.

The three-ply Gretsch Gladstone—with its unique tuning system—and its younger brother, the Billy Gladstone, are remarkable pieces from days gone by. They represent the marriage of music and invention, of intangible and tangible. They are fitting monuments to a Renaissance man.

# I'm playing a big mix of AA, AAX, HH and B8 Pro, so I can control as many sounds as possible." - Mike Portnoy



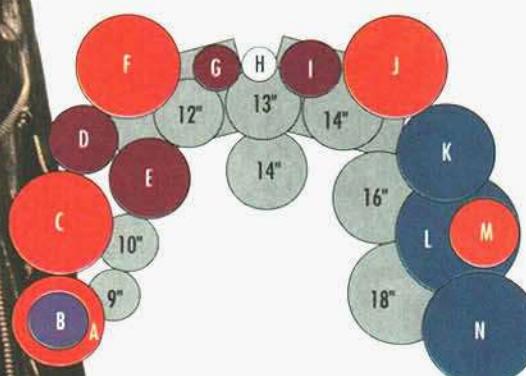
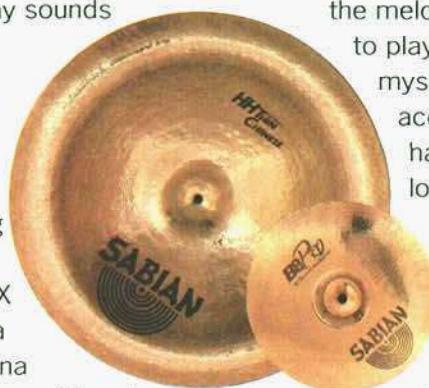
"I'm into technique. But with Dream Theater, we get into some pretty big musical concepts, so my sounds are as important as how I play them. I'm playing a big mix of SABIANS, so I can control as many sounds as possible.

There are higher pitched AA and AAX models with lower sounding HH... I've got three small AAX Splashes and a 10" B8 Pro China Splash with bigger AA and HH Crashes. There are three Chinese:

a small and fast 12" AA Mini Chinese, an 18" AA and this great, trashy sounding 20" HH Thin.

It's a matter of perspective. Like a guitarist or keyboard player, I'm into all the melodic and effects options I need to play the music. And I surround myself with cymbals so I can access them with either or both hands. That in itself opens up a lot of playing and sound combination possibilities."

For more info on SABIAN cymbals and the setups of leading drummers, see your SABIAN dealer or contact us directly for your free copy of this year's SABIAN NewsBeat Catalog.



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- B 10" B8 Pro China Splash
- C 18" AA Chinese
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- E 14" AAX Stage Hi-Hats
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- H 6" CD Cymbal Disc
- I 10" AAX Splash
- J 18" AA Thin Crash
- K 17" HH Thin Crash
- L 22" HH Rock Ride
- M 12" AA Mini Chinese
- N 20" HH Thin Chinese

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## IT'S QUESTIONABLE

(continued from page 16)

No matter how I adjust the spring tension on the left pedal, I cannot get that pedal to be nearly as responsive as the right one. I have even tried playing with the axle in a straight line with the right pedal, but nothing seems to help. When I press on the pedal slowly with my foot, it appears to want to stop just before making contact with the head, thus requiring extra force to make it hit. What can I do to assure left pedal action as good as the right?

Justin Schaffer  
Macungie, PA

**A** We referred your problem to John Roderick, percussion products manager for Kaman Music Corp. (the manufacturer of Gibraltar pedals). He responds, "The difficulty with your 7511DB sounds as if it may be a bearing or possibly a U-joint problem. For the pedal to lock up as you described, it would have to be a fairly major problem. Your Gibraltar dealer can contact us via a dealer 800 number. We will repair or replace defective products within a three-year period from the date of purchase. If your dealer will not accommodate you, please contact me directly at (203) 243-7872."

## Numbness When Playing

**D** I'm a "weekend drummer." I have trouble with my right hand going numb when I play. This causes me to occasionally drop the stick in that hand, because I can't feel it. It doesn't happen all the time,

but when it does, I can't do my fills correctly. Will it help if I practice more? Are there exercises I can do to strengthen my arms and hands?

Steve Mikkola  
Fairfield, CA

**A** Numbness in the hands is not a normal condition, and is usually an indicator of an over-use syndrome, a medical problem, or both. It is often a symptom of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, which can be both initiated and aggravated by the stresses involved with drumming. You should definitely not practice more at this point. Instead, you should have the situation evaluated by your doctor. If you do have a medical problem, your doctor may want you to refrain from drumming for a period of time in order to let the injured area rest and recover. Then you may be referred to an orthopedic specialist or physical therapist for a program of exercises to strengthen your hand, wrist, and arm muscles.

## Hearing Protection

**D** I am interested in hearing protectors that reduce volume but retain all the frequencies equally. They are made by taking a wax model of a person's ears and then casting the protector in plastic. Could you tell me where and how I could buy them here in Finland?

Raimo Harvala  
Rovaniemi, Finland

**A** You are describing ER-15 and ER-20 hearing protectors manufactured

in the USA by Westone Laboratories. (The number refers to how many decibels the devices lower the incoming sound by.) In Europe, similar devices are manufactured by a Dutch company called Elcea bv.

To obtain such hearing protectors, you must first visit an audiologist, who will make an impression of your ears. You would then send these impressions (along with appropriate payment) to Westone or Elcea bv, who would then create the final custom-molded earpieces containing the actual noise-reduction filters.

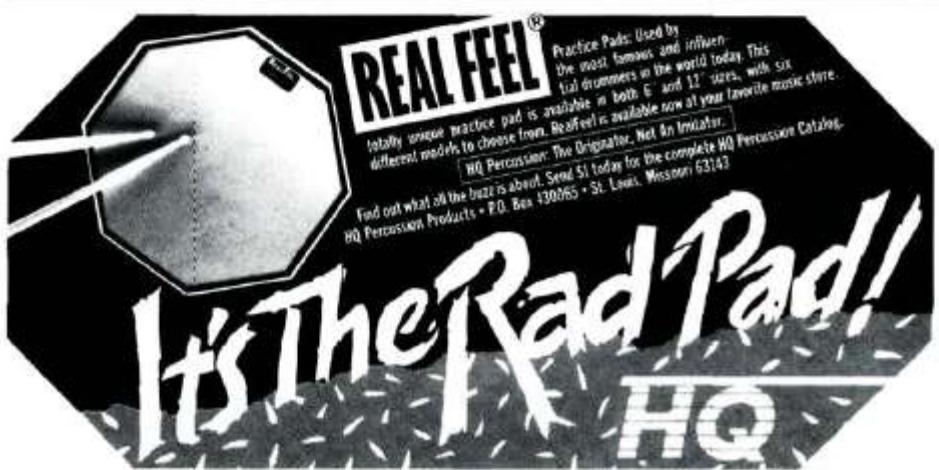
We suggest that you contact the company of your choice for further instructions and price information before you incur the charges of a visit to an audiologist. The address for Westone Laboratories is P.O. Box 15100, Colorado Springs, CO 80935, USA. You can reach Elcea bv at Postbus 230, 5100 AE Dongen, Holland.

## Krupa On CD

**D** In Steve Dunfey's article about Gene Krupa in the March '94 MD, he mentions that Krupa's last recording was 1972's *Jazz At The New School* with Eddie Condon and Wild Bill Davison. Where can I get a copy of this recording? Gene is the man who inspired me to play the drums. We're both of the same era; I'm still playing at age 74 and loving it. I hope you can help me.

Gene Friel  
Connellsville, PA

**A** *Jazz At The New School* was reissued on CD by Chiaroscuro Records in 1989, as catalog number CR(D)-110. In addition to Krupa, Condon, and Davison, the recording features Kenny Davern and Dick Wellstood. Your local record shop should be able to order it for you, or you can contact Chiaroscuro Records, 830 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, (212) 473-0479.



# With SABIAN you'll get all the sounds you'll ever need... right off the rack!"

- Liberty DeVitto

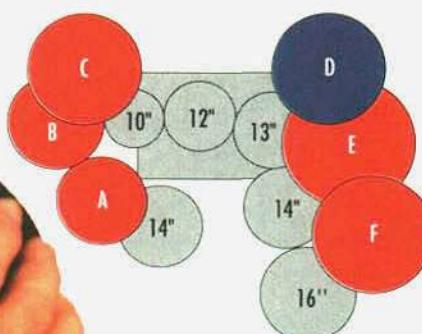


"I could use a hundred cymbals to get all the sounds I need to play Billy's music... he covers so many different styles. But I stick with the same cymbals because I can pull so many different sounds out of every one of them.

Between open and closed, there are dozens of sounds in the 15" AA Sizzle Hats alone. My 22" AA Rock Ride is really cutting on the bell, but it gets louder and really opens up toward the edge. And the 16" and 19" AA and 19" HH Crashes... sometimes I'm tapping their bells, then I'm bashing the HH and AA Rock Crashes across their edges. I even ride on them for that great 60's wall of sound.

You've got to play the dynamics all over the cymbal: from soft to loud, work with the volumes. Sure, there are only a few cymbals in my setup, but there are hundreds of sounds. Hey, believe me, with Billy Joel, I need as many sounds as I can get."

For more info on SABIAN cymbals and the setups of leading drummers, see your SABIAN dealer or contact us directly for your free copy of this year's SABIAN NewsBeat Catalog.



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- B 16" AA Medium Thin Crash
- C 19" AA Rock Crash
- D 19" HH Rock Crash
- E 22" AA Rock Ride
- F 20" AA Crash/Ride

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## MATT CAMERON

continued from page 25

being comfortable with that and creating the illusion of spontaneity within that process, which we've been able to do. It just comes from experience in doing it that way and knowing what the end result is going to sound like. It was important to get as much natural energy as we could as a band, but the music we wrote was very free and open-ended, so it lent itself to that kind of sound."

Since virtually every song on *Superunknown* received its own special sonic treatment, we asked Matt to detail the specific approaches he used for several of the cuts.

**"Fourth Of July":** "I replaced all my crash cymbals with rides, and I can explain the reason I did this in one word: Bonham! I just wanted that long, elegant cymbal sound he was so known for. The riff in that song is so slow, thick, and meaty that I just felt it needed that syrup on top. I also used a tambourine drum that Gregg invented."

**"Let Me Down":** "I used a 14" Keplinger snare and a 12" Brady snare at the same time. That was new for me, recording with two snares, but I wanted to get different feels and cracks at different times, and it didn't make sense to overdub any of that. It feels different when you do it all in one sitting."

**"Head Down":** "I went with this old Gretsch snare that I didn't use on any other song. It was a real subtle sound, almost like a tom. I used a smaller kick drum, too, and Gregg and Ben also played drums on that. I was just thinking of this swirling whirlpool of sound, especially in the drum break at the end. Ben played this spastic, rhythmic part that swells in and out of the mix throughout the song, and Gregg brought in his own kit and just went for it."

**"Like Suicide":** "There are a lot more highs and lows on this record all the way around because the songs demanded it, and "Like Suicide" is a good example of how I generally approached this whole record as far as dynamics were concerned. The song starts out low and then just jumps out of the speakers, and I accented that by using the two different kits, starting with the smaller kit and then overdubbing the bigger kit. I wanted to physically feel the shift."

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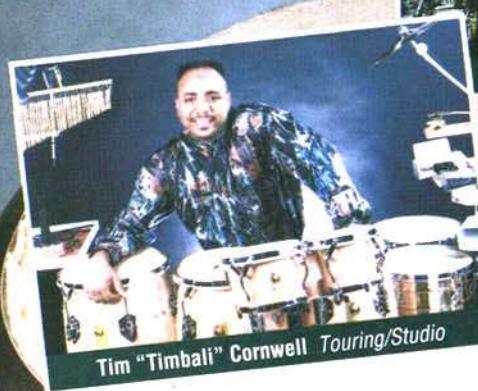
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**KAMAN**

# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DRUMSTICKS

Chapter Three: Picking The Perfect Stick.

## DESIGNING THE RIGHT STICK

As discussed in the previous chapters, each element of a stick's design is related to a specific aspect of the stick's performance; Tip to Sound, Neck and Taper to Strength and Response, Body to Comfort and Control. By subtly altering and balancing these basic elements a stick can be created to facilitate virtually any style of playing.

For instance, if the goal is to produce a stick for lighter, faster playing a rounder tip, thinner neck, longer taper and smaller body is utilized. Where louder playing and greater durability is required a flatter tip, thicker neck, shorter taper and bigger body stick is designed to meet the needs of the music being played.

Since many of their designs have become classics over the years, Calato continues to offer a wide range of time-tested designs, from the 3A and 5A for traditional playing styles to the 5B and Quantum Series for more contemporary ones, while developing a new generation of sticks like the 3B, 7B, 8A, 9A and Noble & Cooley for more progressive players.

Along with the latest designs, finest materials and exclusive manufacturing processes, the stick people at Calato also rely on the invaluable expertise of top endorsing artists as they fine-tune a new stick's design.

Alex Van Halen (Van Halen) helped design his Calato Performer Series stick by combining a variety of his favorite elements. As Alex puts it, "My 3BL's have a beefed-up neck for greater durability, a streamlined body for comfort and an extra long shaft for the balance and rebound that better suit my style."

When Michael Baker (Whitney Houston) was looking for a stick that could handle the rock, pop and ballad requirements of his current situation he chose the Regal 7B because he found it to be "a cross between a 5B and a 2B where they've taken the best parts of two sticks and made them into one."

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT STICK

Proving that "different strokes for different folks" is certainly true where drummers are concerned, Jim Keltner (Neil Young) says "I carry tons of different sticks all the time and use whatever the music calls for" regarding his selection of sticks, while Lars Ulrich (Metallica) sums up his approach by stating "The Regal Tip 5B is the only drumstick I've ever played with. EVER!"

Most players do agree, however, that whether you decide to play one favorite stick or several the best way to select sticks is to determine the body, neck, taper and tip that are most appropriate for your playing style and situation and then compare the various models that present those attributes.

- Compare how the differences in body length, diameter and weight effect your level of comfort and control by playing a variety of snare drum and drumset patterns with 3 pair of similar diameter but different length sticks (3A, 8A, 3B), 3 pair of similar length but different diameter sticks (5A, 5B, 7B) and 3 pair of light, medium, and heavy sticks of any single model.

- Compare the responsiveness and power of a Long Taper/Thin Neck (5A) to a Short Taper/Thick Neck (3B) by playing a series of single and double stroke patterns on a snare drum or

drum pad, keeping in mind that the durability of a stick is a factor of the relationship between the diameter of the neck vs. the diameter of the body.

- Compare the tone quality and definition of a variety of tip types by playing swing, latin and rock patterns on a ride cymbal using sticks with Oval (5A, 5B), Round (Quantum 3000) and Flat (8A) tips. Listen to the differences between wood and nylon tips, too.

## PICKING THE RIGHT STICK

Once you've chosen your favorite model, here are some tips on how to pick the best ones in the store- whether you're buying one pair or a dozen.

- Match your potential sticks to the ones you know and like, not to one another. Hang on to your favorite sticks and take them with you whenever you buy sticks so that you always have a point of comparison.

- Roll the sticks to check for warpage but also check for tightness and uniformity of grain which are good indicators of a stick's durability.

- Many players will further select sticks that fall within their preferred light, medium, or heavy weight ranges by tapping the sticks and matching their pitches.

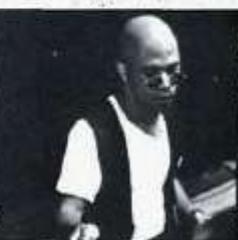
- Don't hesitate to try a different model from time to time, especially if you're a younger, growing player. And, if you're ever in doubt, look for a stick with our name on it. Because ultimately everything you need to know about drumsticks can be summed up in just two words: Regal Tip.



Alex Van Halen



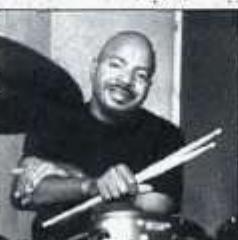
Jim Keltner



Michael Baker



Mickey Clamy



Chester Thompson



John Saar

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The  
Stick  
People

**"Half:** "I turned a bass drum on its side so it faced up, like a symphonic drum, and I used a snare drum with the snares off. I also did a Cabasa part and used one cymbal. I wanted to play that song like a pianist or an orchestral percussionist would, just laying everything flat so I could stand up and play it with mallets. The drums were the last thing to go on that song, which was kind of neat. But there's a whole second half to the song that didn't make it on the record. It was this completely different rock section that we just couldn't get right on tape. There were tempo fluctuations going from part A to part B that we tried to overcome with studio wizardry [laughs], but it would have been a little too obvious."

Cameron agrees that the end results made for a record that owes much, at least on the surface, to the more acidic bands of the late '60s and early '70s. But if there was any conscious tie to the era, it was through embodying the *spirit* of the times rather than the sounds. "We didn't intentionally set out to copy any specific genre," says Matt, "but we wanted the most natural sounds to come out of our instruments, and

that probably led to a freer approach to playing music, which was more prevalent in the '60s. But we also experimented a lot in the studio with sounds and instruments and breaking the songs down in terms of using exactly what was called for. We were able to get heavy with acoustic guitar—kind of a new level of heaviness. [laughs] A song like 'Head Down' is a new level of achievement for us. We've never had an acoustic-psychadelic type of song with a lot of low-end sweetness.

"One of the neat things about this record

is that we were able to keep the improvisational elements intact, which I guess also harkens back a couple of decades. On some of our earlier stuff, it sounds a little bit forced to me. It worked well on 'Slaves And Bulldozers,' where there's a really great guitar solo/chaos section in it. But it's always been hard to make improv work for us, and I think this is the first time we've really nailed it. The endings of 'My Wave' and 'Head Down' just happened as we were recording, but they came off well."

Sessions for *Superunknown* didn't come

**"...when you get right down to it,  
the feel of this pedal is the  
reason why i play it. period. ..."**

-joel rosenblatt-



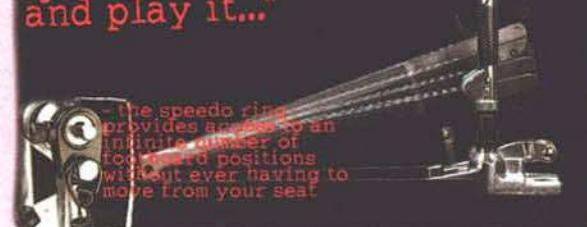
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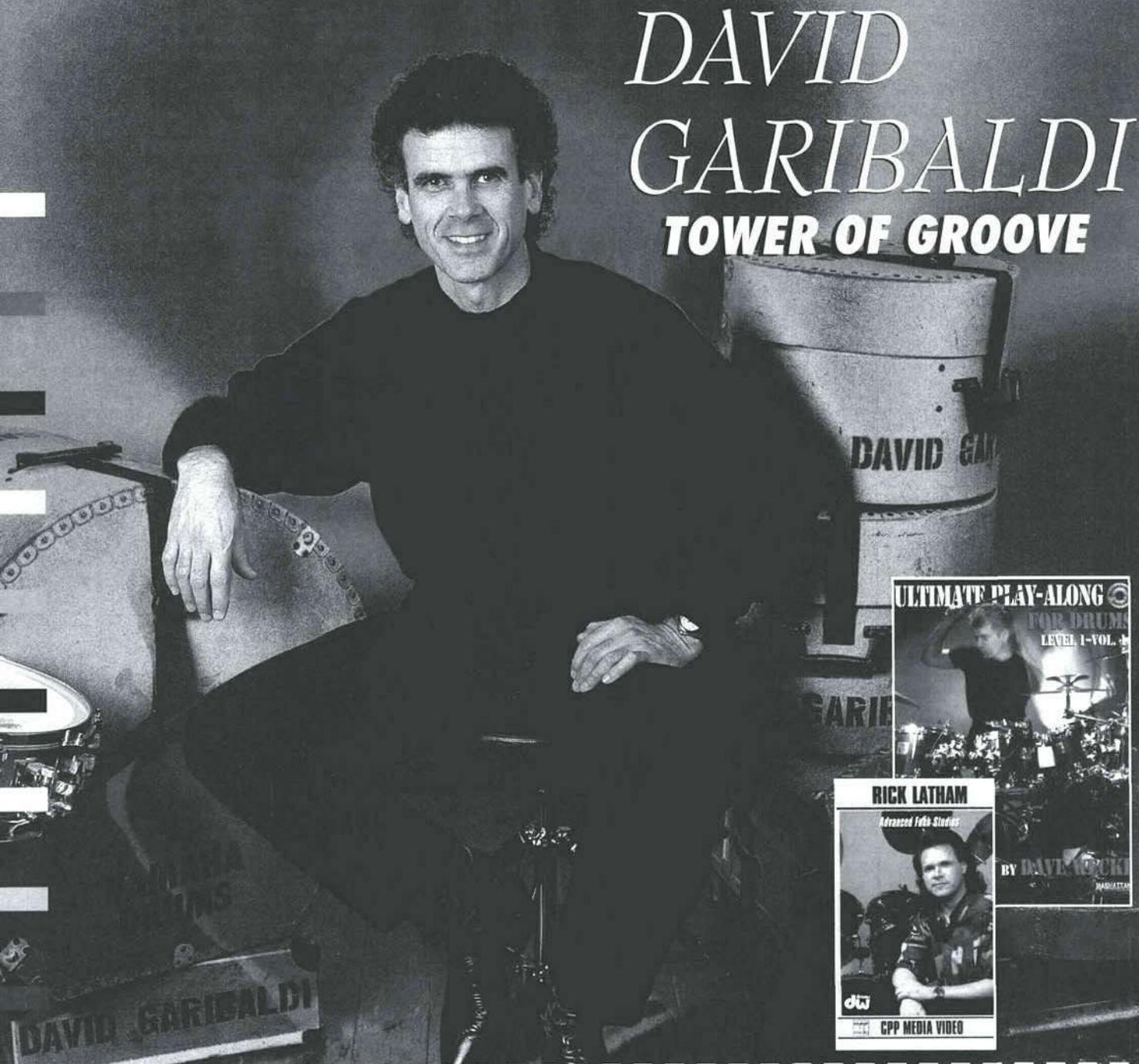
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without their struggles, though. The band and producer Michael Beinhorn often worked at different speeds. "Let's just say it was a little tough in the studio this time," Cameron says with a laugh. "We like the records Michael's produced, and he was in this band we knew of called Material. But we'd never worked with him before. We'd done the past two records with Terry Date, and we just wanted to try something new. But we didn't figure out how slowly Michael likes to work until we got into the studio. Chris liked using him because he was very meticulous with the vocals, but his pace really bothered me. And Michael was pretty anal about his set way of recording drums, though it worked in some cases. He likes a lot of high-end tones and high-end crack on the snares, almost to excess.

"So what we ended up doing, as a band, was just take more control of the sounds. Michael was cool with that, but we still went down some unnecessary roads we might not otherwise have had to if we'd used someone who was a little quicker and more in tune with what we wanted. What really balanced things out was that we had a really good engineer, Jason Cassaro, who

has worked on a lot of very cool records and got some really great drum sounds. Having him involved really put our record on solid ground.

"The studio has always been tough for us in one way or another," Matt continues. "I really like the studio, and recording is very satisfying, but there's just a lot of heartache that goes with it sometimes. It's not always the producer's fault, but we might just end up producing our own record next time—just for our own sanity!"

Meanwhile, Cameron decided long

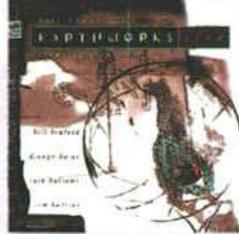
before hitting the studio that he wanted to contribute more with his pen. "I've written a lot of songs in the past," he says, "but only in the past year and a half have I actually sat down to try and write a Soundgarden song. 'Mailman' is one that I thought would be good for us. Luckily everyone liked what I'd written, so I guess I'm getting to the point where I can write Soundgarden songs. And believe me, I went through a lot of songs to get to this point—most of it crap!"

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shoes. He's been a big influence on how I play guitar. I just really like his style, and I was always interested in how he got his sounds. I also based some of my tunings on what he'd done.

"And I'm proud to say this is the first album where I've received lyric-writing credit," he adds with an air of sarcasm. "I wrote the music for 'Fresh Tendrils,' and when I was doing the demo for it, I had this melody idea and sang these goofy lyrics. They're just the first two lines of the song, but Chris ended up using them. But, hey, if it'll get me half the songwriting credit, I'll take it every time."

Songwriting has also given Cameron fresh perspective and insight into his playing and music on the whole. "It's hard to find avenues where you can allow yourself to grow as a musician. I can't dedicate the time to just hole up in a room somewhere and practice like I used to. But songwriting has had a big effect, especially in my overall approach to music and exploring how it moves. But just through touring and listening to myself play, I think I'm getting better at conceiving drum parts and learning how to deconstruct them and take parts

away that aren't necessary or that detract from the music."

Though Soundgarden offers enough turns of direction to keep Cameron on his toes, the thirty-year-old drummer has broadened his horizons by performances and recordings with other groups. His drumming set much of the tone for *Temple Of The Dog*, a 1991 Cornell-Cameron collaboration with bassist Jeff Ament and guitarist Mike McCready in their pre-Pearl Jam days. Then after coming off Soundgarden's ten-month tour for

*Badmotorfinger*, Cameron and Shepherd hooked up with the guitarist of Monster Magnet, bassist John Waterman, and singer Brian Wood for the garage stylings of Hater.

"Hater came about in the 'Post-Tour Syndrome' after Lollapalooza," Cameron recalls, "and we wrote most of it at Ben's house. It was so much fun and it didn't take much time, either—about five days. It was my first experience writing and singing the lyrics to a whole song, and it was just nice to play with new musicians

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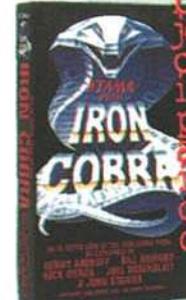
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who took me in directions I don't normally go. And it made coming back to Soundgarden a lot more fresh for me."

Cameron stepped out of rock altogether for a challenging weekend jazz gig in Seattle with Pigpen. "They play this weird improv-based, free-form style of jazz, and I had to learn this really difficult music," he says. "I also played with their whole band, including their drummer. Originally I thought it was just going to be me. But in rehearsal, I had to approach things differently because it was the two of us. It was probably *most* interesting when we had to play off each other. It was a lot of fun playing in that format. The challenging aspect was that their music is very intense from a rhythmic standpoint, and I had to really bone up on my reading and my chops to get through it. They gave me all the charts and I just locked myself in my basement and learned it. I hadn't really done any reading like that since I was in school, so it was a great refresher course for me."

"Still, I think I'm best at playing rock music. I like jazz and I have a small background in it, but I'm really a rock drummer with a rock drummer's mentality. When

I've played jazz, I've felt like I had to restrain myself unnaturally. But I've done quartet and trio stuff, and I've played with some big bands where I've had the chance to just blow, and those are always a lot of fun for me. But I'm a rock guy at heart."

Soundgarden literally stepped into the major leagues with its tour for *Badmotorfinger*—opening the jaunt in front of 60,000 people at the "Day On The Green" festival in Oakland, California, and going on to support Guns N' Roses in the United States and overseas before joining the *Lollapalooza II* bill. It's an atmosphere Cameron would just as soon leave behind.

"Opening for Guns N' Roses was good for us in a couple of respects. At that time it was the coveted slot, and we felt honored to be asked by them. We didn't get much radio or MTV play, so it gave us an opportunity to bring our music to massive amounts of people at a time and it gave us experience at handling stadium crowds.

"We also realized it didn't feel that great," Matt reveals. "It was very impersonal, and there's no room for our brand of music to be absorbed as it should be. You can't hear a lot of the nuances underneath

this big loud bomb. And it's not a great setting because you're playing in places designed for soccer or hockey, so the sound really isn't that great. Stadiums and large arenas can be a rush, but we definitely give better performances in small theaters and clubs, and that's what we'll probably stick to for the new tour."

Cameron is also optimistic that the new tour and record will expose the band to people who previously would have viewed Soundgarden with preconceived notions. "The 'Seattle sound' and 'grunge' weren't anything that really existed; they were terms propagated by the media to describe us," he says. "But the bands that got real successful—Nirvana, Tad, Mudhoney, Pearl Jam—they got successful because they write great music. So in that sense, I'm very proud we were a part of that."

"But I'm also disgusted that some newer bands have taken the wrong elements out of that music—the fashion side of it and the surface sound—but they don't have the essence, the heart of it. And then all the other bands like us and Nirvana couldn't get out of that stereotype because the media wouldn't let us. Fortunately, I think

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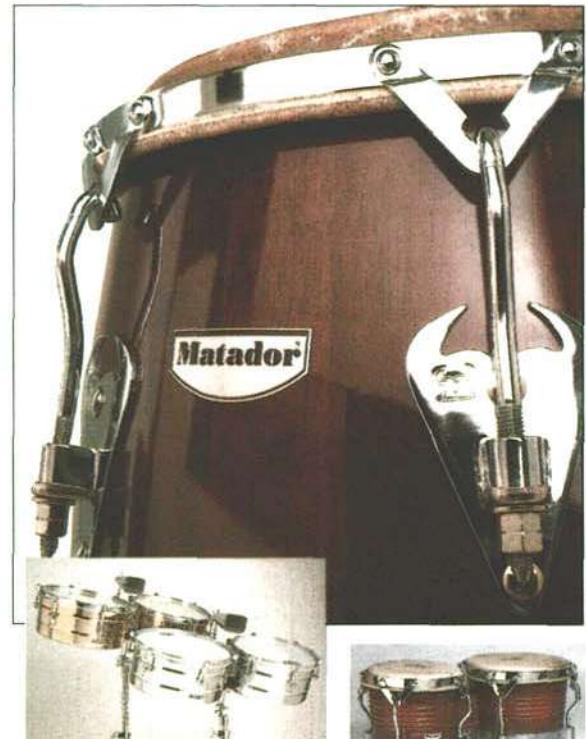


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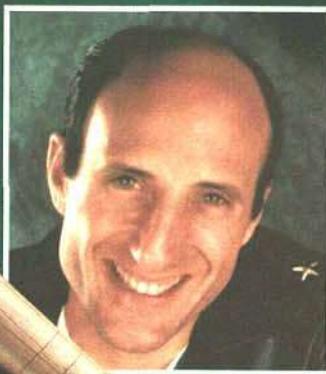
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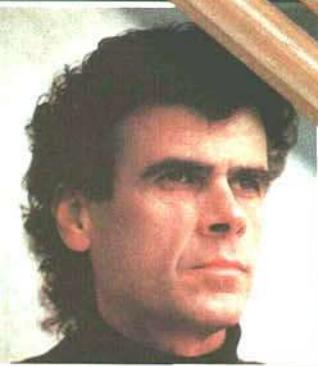


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we've all been able to remove ourselves from it enough to create the music we want to create."

Cameron advises newer bands to hold onto their ideals and visions for as long as they can and to never compromise their integrity. That way, when success comes along, it will be on the band's terms, not a record label's. "We were fortunate when we started out that our main impetus was to write music we liked. We didn't try to get signed, so we had a pretty solid foundation before we ever got involved with the business side of music. So many bands start out with the idea of getting signed and having a career in the business. Once they get there, they realize the business is non-artistic and has nothing to do with the music. That can definitely chew up a lot of bands, especially when the decisions are out of your hands.

"And things don't get any easier when you're at our level," Matt suggests. "We have a few albums out and we're on a major label now, so there's a lot more demand on our time, which takes us away from the music. It takes a lot of pre-planning and arranging of our personal sched-

ules just to rehearse together. But each of us knows, with all the other stuff going on around us at any given time, that the music is the most important thing. It's also what we do best. We're not actors, or promoters, or businessmen. Sometimes as an artist you have to do and be all those things. It gets very hectic, but it all becomes clear very quickly when it's just the four of us in a room with our instruments. That's when we regain our perspective—and our sanity."

Cameron wants to eventually parlay his knowledge and enjoyment of the studio into producing records for other bands. "I've already started working with a few people," he says. "But to do it full-time, at least when you're starting out, you inevitably have to work with bands you don't necessarily like, and I don't know if I really want to do that."

Drumming, meanwhile, is his primary focus. "I want to learn how to play the bodhran and get into the tabla. But I mainly just want to become more free in my playing while keeping it solid. I want to be able to create more contrasts and colors in my playing, and I think I did that more on this

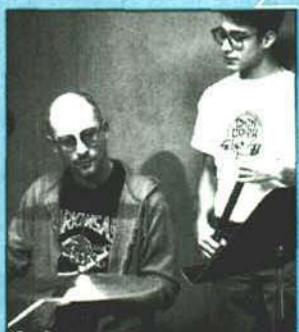
record than ever before. It feels better to me, like I'm maturing as a player and able to actually play what I feel inside—not necessarily what I hear, but what I feel."

"I'm actually starting to be able to emote on the drums, which is kind of a weird thing to try to do. I mean, you can reach that emotional part of yourself a lot easier on an instrument such as the piano or saxophone. But to do that on the drums is extremely difficult. Drums have always been an instrument that can send out messages, but there's only so much you can get out of it in the way of communicating your feelings. Elvin Jones can do it, Tony Williams and Steve Gadd can do it. It seems like it would take a lifetime to get to where those guys are at."

"I feel like I'm just barely scratching the surface now. It's a hard thing to describe, but you know you're there when you feel it. Playing a song that hits you on that deep emotional level and being able to match that with what you're playing on the drums—that can just lift you and the song to another level."



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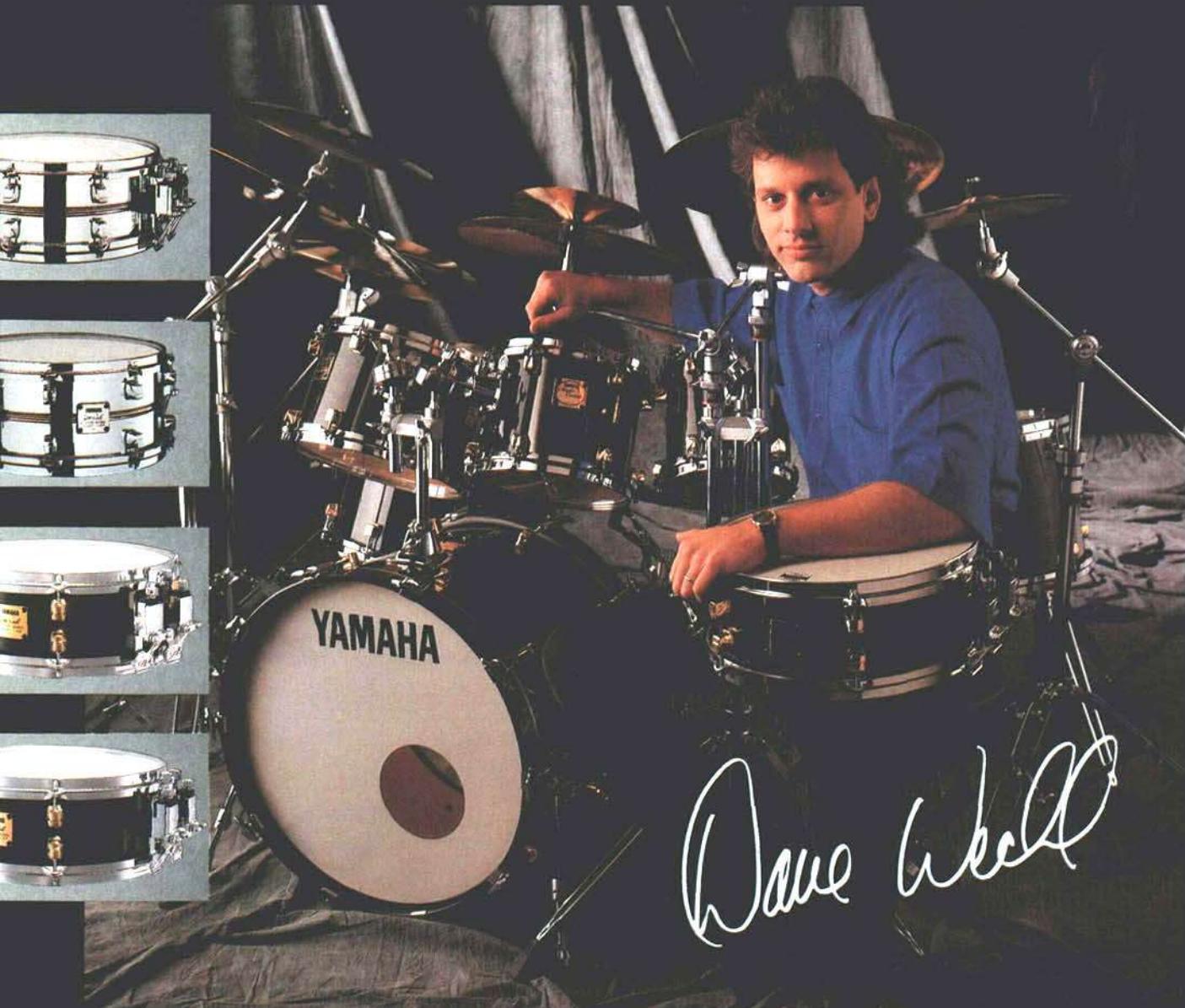
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# Doubling Up: Part 1



by Rod Morgenstein

## MUSIC KEY



"Doubling up" is an interesting technique for enhancing ride patterns. For example, if a hi-hat part consists of 16th notes, the idea is to vary the 16th-note pattern with 32nd notes.

For starters, practice the following two exercises on the hi-hat. Go for a consistent sound with stick definition. (Keeping the hi-hat tightly closed will help.)

R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L

R L R L R R L L R R L L

Examples 1 - 5 present five possible combinations of 16th and 32nd notes, with the bass drum and snare playing a very basic back-beat pattern.

1 R R L L R R L L R L R L

2 R R L L R L R L R L R L

3 R L R L R L R R L L

4 R L L R R L R L R L

5 R L R L R L L R R L L

Examples 6 - 10 go a step further by mixing up the various combinations and experimenting with different bass drum patterns.

6

7

8 L L R R L L R R L L

9 R L R L

10

Doubling up also works nicely when syncopating the snare part. Example 11 has the snare playing on "ah" of 1.

11

For example 12, the snare plays on the "ah" of 3.

12 > > >>

Example 13 has the snare syncopating on the "&" of 1 and the "e" of 2.

13 R L R L R L

Here is another 32nd-note sticking pattern you might want to try:

R L L R R L L L R L L R R L L R

R L R L R L L R R L L R

Examples 14 and 15 are beats that utilize the previous sticking patterns. Notice, however, that the last note of each 32nd-note pattern is played by the bass drum, not the hi-hat. This is strictly a matter of taste. You can play the note on the hi-hat with the right hand if you prefer.

14 R L L R R L L

15 R L L R R L L R L L R R L L

This 32nd-note sticking pattern also works well with the left hand ghosting on the snare drum. For example:

16 R L L R R L L R L L R R L L

The technique of doubling up is a practical one employed by many drummers in various styles of music. Next time we'll check out some other ways of incorporating it into the drumset.

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# Computer Networking For Drummers

by Steve Luongo

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There are national on-line services such as CompuServe, Prodigy, and America On Line. There are also many private BBSs all over the world, with almost 3,000 in the U.S. alone. Most of these boards will carry one or more music-related conferences. A "conference" is an area of the BBS designated for a specific topic. This is where you would send and receive messages called E-mail (electronic mail) to other musicians who have the same interests as you do.

Finding the right BBS for your needs is a hit-or-miss situation. You must know where to look and what to look for. Ask for help at the computer store in your town. They may have a list of local BBSs—or they may run one themselves. Sometimes there are BBS listings in the back of computer magazines. Not all bulletin boards have music conferences, so it will be necessary for you to log on (call in with your PC) and look around. Many BBSs post lists of other boards, so eventually you will find one with conferences that suit your needs.

Once you have found the right board, you

must log on, fill out the questionnaire, choose a password, and wait for your user validation from the sysop (system operator). He or she might call you back on the phone to verify your information and prevent unauthorized log-ons. Some boards have a small subscription fee; others do not. When you have been upgraded to user status, you can begin to use the BBS.

Follow the simple instructions on the screen (the computer will provide "help" when asked), scan the conference list, and join a music conference. They will have names like "Drums On Line," "Musicians Wanted," and "Drum Talk." Read the public messages left by other musicians. Some of these will be directed to specific individuals, while others will be addressed to "All." The "All" messages are inviting a response, but you can respond to any public message that is of interest to you.

It's possible to find messages from people half-way around the world. You might think that sending E-mail to another musician in South Africa or the Netherlands could run up a hefty phone bill. The fact is that many local BBSs are linked to large international networks that pick up and deliver E-mail throughout the world as part of their service. Local messages can be transferred back and forth in no time, but it can take a couple of days to get a response to an international message.

If your local board does not offer any music conferences, ask the sysop if you can start one of your own. All it takes is leaving a message to "All" asking if there are any musicians out there. Eventually someone will respond.

Local music conferences are a great way to find other musicians. This can help you form a band or replace a band member who has left. Or maybe you're the drummer in a local band that would like to find new places to play in other cities. Use the conference to contact musicians from that city. They can probably give you all the information you need about the club scene there. One of them might be able to turn you on to a promoter or agent who would be interested in booking your band. Using this technique in more than one city could result in a small tour.

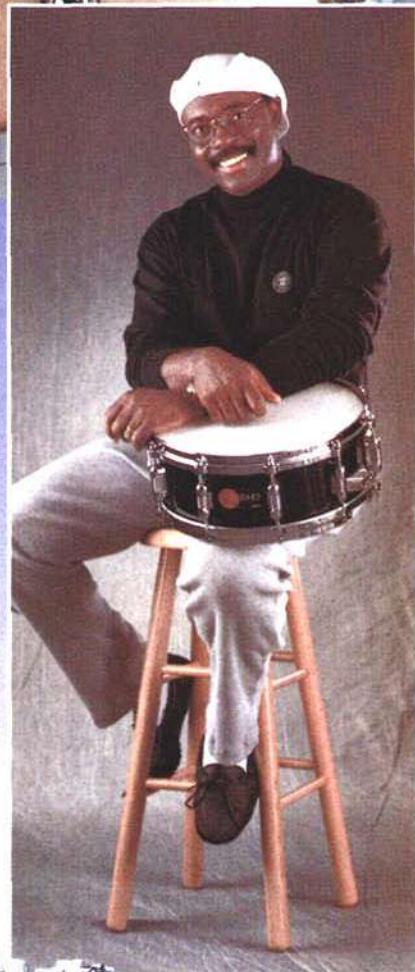
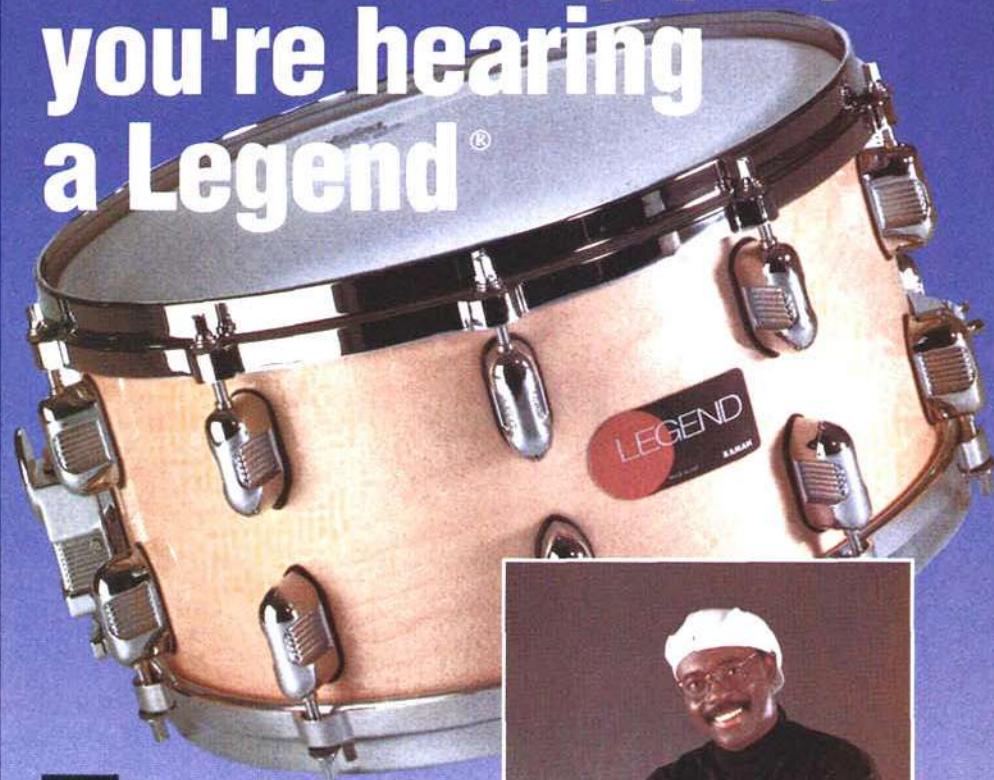
One advantage of these BBSs is that you no longer have to live in a major city such as New York, London, or Paris to carry on regular conversations with the local musicians there. Imagine having discussions about the music scene in Germany, Australia, or the U.K. with the people who make it happen! E-mail can be sent to a teacher in San Francisco, a session player in Liverpool, or a booking agent in France.

Some touring musicians contact other players in the cities where they will be performing. This can provide them with a little

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inside information before they arrive—such as the name and phone number of the local drum shop, a good restaurant, or the hottest night spot in town.

If you're a beginner and live in a small town, you probably don't have many choices when it comes to getting advice. Your computer can now put you in touch with a wide range of musicians, from amateurs to professionals. You will have an opportunity to ask questions that might have otherwise gone unanswered.

If your family is planning a trip to see Aunt Peg in New Orleans, you can contact other players there and set up some jams before you arrive. This can turn a boring trip into an important musical experience. After you return home, you can stay in touch with those players until your next visit.

There are conferences devoted entirely to used items for sale—often at very reasonable prices. If you have something to sell, you can post your own list. You can find some great bargains on used or vintage gear.

Students can interact with each other to compare notes about their lessons. They can also find teachers who specialize in specific areas, such as jazz or rock. Teachers can expand their teaching base by reaching more students.

You will also find file sections of these BBSs that have text files on a variety of subjects. If you are willing to do a little searching you can find text files on everything from tuning drums to rudiment studies. There are files on music trivia and musician referral lists. These files can be downloaded into your PC and read (offline) after you have disconnected from the BBS.

Communication is essential for growth. The potential for growth through the BBS network is enormous. Plug in and log on.

*Steve Luongo can be contacted by E-mail through the Drums on Line conference on the Entertainment Consultants BBS, White Plains, NY (914) 683-3665.*



# A look At Easton Drumsticks

by Rick Van Horn

When Easton, Inc. first introduced aluminum baseball and softball bats some twenty-seven years ago, they weren't accepted. There was a sound problem, and they looked and felt metallic. It took five years before the company got even a few percentage points of the market. But times and tastes change, and today Easton makes about 50% of the world's bats—including somewhere around 80% of all baseball bats. They also make between 90% and 95% of the world's arrows—along with ice and field hockey sticks, ski poles, golf shafts, badminton shafts, and other products.

Notice a trend? Every product Easton makes used to be wood—which makes Easton's introduction of aluminum drumsticks two years ago seem inevitable rather than surprising.

"We've learned how to duplicate the properties of wood in something more durable and consistent," says Larry Carlson, Easton's general manager of new business development. "We've applied that knowledge to our *Ahead* [Advanced High-Efficiency Alloy Drumstick] sticks, and they're really taking off. In fact, they were the most successful first-year product we've ever had."

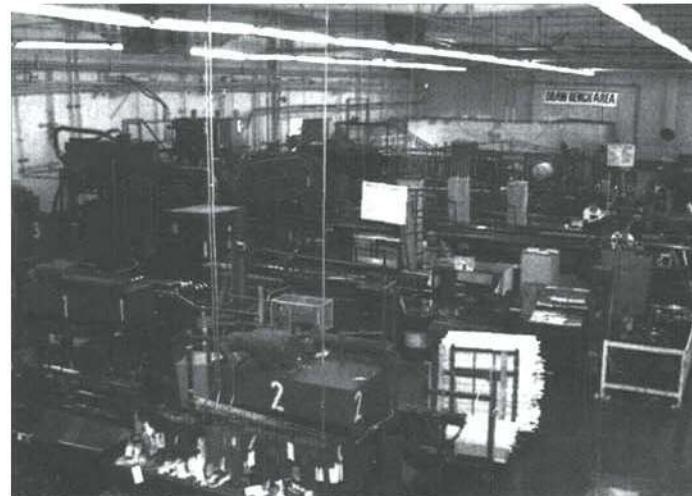
Easton's sticks are not the first to be made out of aluminum. But they probably are the first to have been developed with the amount of research and dedication that designer (and drummer) Rick Grossman put into their creation. Rick first had to evaluate what makes a wood drumstick do what it does and feel the way it feels. Then he had to re-create—and try to improve on—those performance characteristics using totally different materials. "We realized that we weren't going to change the way people play drums," says Rick, "so we had to make our stick fit their needs in terms of playability and feel."

### Stick Development

Ironically, when Larry Carlson first came to Rick Grossman with the concept of aluminum drumsticks, Rick thought it was a bad idea. "But I was playing a lot," says Rick, "and I got tired of breaking wood sticks. I was working here building lab equipment at the time, and I had dealt with some other materials—including some urethanes. One night in 1990 I had the idea of a sleeve of some kind to reinforce the stick. Before I spent any developmental money, I bought some of the aluminum sticks that were on the market at the time, and wrapped urethane around them. I didn't know what it was going to sound like—but it wasn't bad. Next, I tried to figure out how the flex of an aluminum stick would be—compared to a wood stick—because I wanted to make it the same. That led me to design a stick with a long taper, onto which a urethane cover could be molded."



Easton Ahead sticks were created by drummer/engineer Rick Grossman. Tests were performed on machines like this one: the world's only drumstick-playing robot.



Huge machines in Easton's tube mill are used to refine aerospace aluminum tubing in order to bring out its ultimate strength. Drumsticks start life as tubing several times larger than their final diameter.

Before Rick could actually create a stick, he had to determine what type of aluminum would be best for the purpose. "The homework that [corporate president] Jim Easton and all the other great engineers have done here is what allowed us to do drumsticks," says Rick. "The alloy starts out as a commercial material, called 7075 aluminum. But we bring the ultimate strength out of that material by means of some special forming and heat-treating processes we have out in our plant. It's as strong as a lot of steel alloys at one-third the weight."

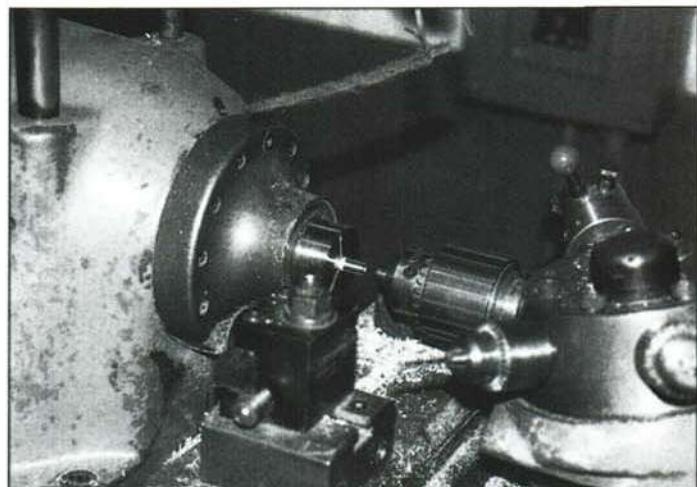
Research into the physics of wood drumstick performance led Rick to a core-and-cover design for his sticks. "With wood sticks," Rick says, "as soon as you reduce the body of the stick—as in the way the neck and shoulder wear thin because of rimshots and cymbal hits—the performance drops right away. We don't have that problem, because the aluminum core gives the stick its strength and playing characteristics, while the replaceable cover gives it its wear-resistance. You can chew up the cover and the flex characteristics of the stick will remain the same."

Coming up with the right cover became one of Rick's toughest challenges. "The cover that we use today looks like a simple piece of plastic," he says, "but it's not. We couldn't even get on the market for about eight months because we were waiting to find out how to mold the covers. We went through three molding companies before we found one that could do it the way we wanted. That company pumps the cover material into an injection mold under 200 tons of pressure to form the cover. The mold cavity alone for our ST and LT covers cost \$40,000!"

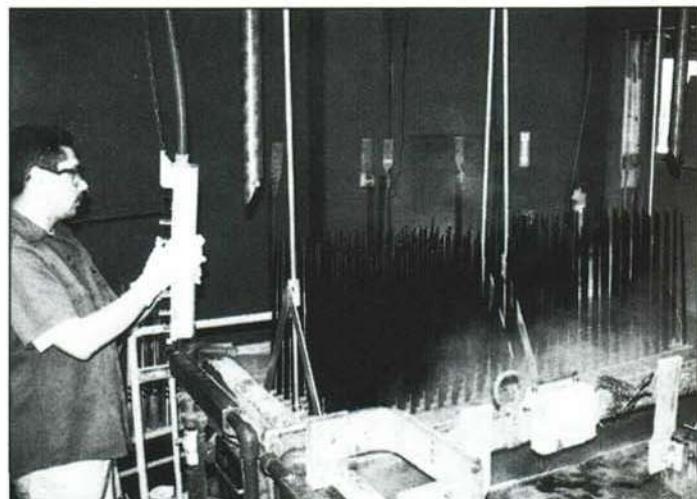
"We also have an exclusive on the material," Rick continues. "It's a super-tough type of urethane made by Myles Chemical. We tested every kind of plastic there was, and the material we chose is the most cut-resistant, without being too hard. If it was rock-hard, it would produce *too* sharp a crack—something that wouldn't sound like wood. But its cut-resistance is still phenomenal, so it holds up real well to cymbal edges—and rimshots really don't affect it at all."

Rick has a sizable box of prototypes—including a number of startling failures—to document the history of Easton's stick development. "We tried to knock one problem out at a time," he says. "After we succeeded at making covers, I realized that I needed an interface between the end of the cover and the tapered handle of the stick core—to prevent the cover from sliding up onto that taper and cracking. So we machine a hard metal 'blend ring' to fit between the two. But it's more than a cosmetic thing. We actually locate off of that blend ring for some of the machining that we do. We put a blend ring on the stick, slip our standard cover over it, and the tip threads come right to the tip end of the cover."

"People may think that we just throw some aluminum into a machine and out come drumsticks," continues Rick. "But there is a *lot* of hand crafting that goes into each and every stick. For example, after the cores are formed, we cut them to final length, then drill out each one to make sure that the tip weight is identical to the spec and the diameter is correct to plus or minus one thousandth of an inch. Then we thread the end to receive the nylon playing tip. Some drummers play with a rotational movement that 'unscrews' the tips, so we put one drop of glue on the tips just for insurance—even though they are removable. Covers usually wear out sooner than tips do, and people want to get the tips off in order to replace the covers. The way to do that without damaging them is to wrap them with a piece of cardboard and then grip them with pliers to break the glue hold."



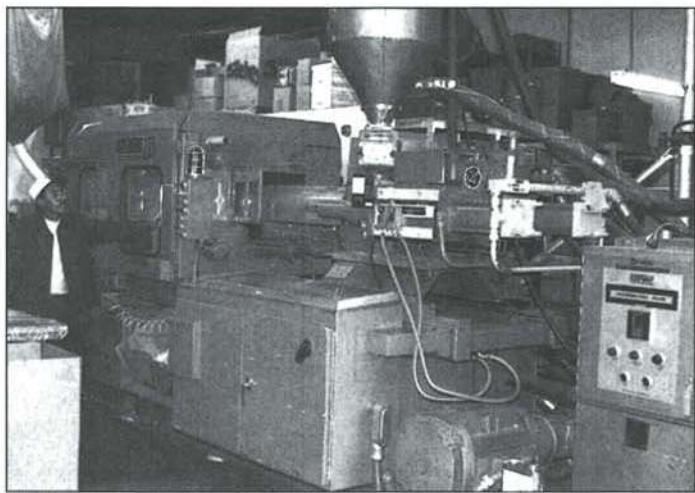
Drumstick cores are threaded by means of a precision tip-machining operation.



Drumsticks are anodized in an electrochemical process that provides both a protective coating to prevent corrosion and a distinctive black finish.

Once Rick had a functional stick design, the next goal was to get the vibration out of it. "We developed some technology that Easton has incorporated into bats and hockey sticks," he explains, "called a Vibration Reduction System (VRS). It uses inserts of high-tech dampening material to absorb the vibrations that we don't want to get to the drummer's hand. The core of the stick is a hollow tube, but our sticks *don't feel* like hollow tubes. We've learned over a period of time that if we make the stick too dead, it kills a little of the performance that some people enjoy. We've found a good balance where you're not getting vibration, but you do get a stiff, cracking feel without the heavy shock."

After the aluminum drumstick cores were designed, Rick decided to have them peened. Peening is high-impact blasting with steel shot (in a method similar to sandblasting, but used to compact the material rather than to remove it). "The shot-peening



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...to create two drumstick covers at a time.

process serves two functions," says Rick. "It helps to relieve stress and strengthen the sticks, while also providing the grip texture. The company who peens our sticks does similar operations on airplane parts critical to flight safety, so their tolerances and quality level are exceptional."

The distinctive look of Easton's sticks is more than just a cosmetic feature. "After they're peened, our sticks are anodized," explains Rick. "In anodizing, you're building up an oxide coating on the aluminum itself; you're not adding an outside layer of another metal like in chrome plating. This helps to prevent corrosion. Then we dye the oxide black. When people see black sticks

with white tips on stage, they know those sticks are ours. If we made white ones, the audience couldn't tell. So that's our signature look."

As a drummer, Rick did a good deal of preliminary evaluations on the sticks himself. However, he credits the most important part of their development to input from major drumming artists. "My capabilities brought things just so far," says Rick. "Working with the 'big guys' really stepped it up. And we're still making improvements. Since we've come on the market, we've continued to work on increasing the sticks' life span. A lot of people buy the sticks assuming that because they're metal they'll never break. And we could have easily *made* a stick that would 'never break'—but it would have been a very heavy thing. Our stick was designed to be a *performance* stick; durability was not even part of the original concept. The fact that people are actually saving money because the sticks *are* so durable is something that I consider to be a bonus."

### In The Lab

Rick Grossman's working environment at Easton is the testing laboratory. "We did more testing on drumsticks before we entered the market than has been done on any other product in Easton's history," Rick proudly says, "and we spent a *lot* of money on R&D. There was never any pressure to hurry up and get something on the market. I love working for an engineer rather than an accountant."

To aid in developing the sticks, Rick designed some unique testing machines. One is a fatigue machine, which flexes a stick mechanically to determine its durability. "It ran about thirty million cycles on drumsticks," says Rick, "trying different wall thicknesses and heat treatments, before we came to our current design. With wood sticks, you can get a lot of difference in feel when you just rotate the stick 90° in your hand. The difference in the grain structure will cause the stick to flex differently. Our sticks are rotationally balanced: There's no seam or grain, so it's the same flex, no matter where you grab it."

Another of Rick's creations is the world's only drumstick robot, which holds and hits a stick against a rubber pad. "It goes up to about 650 beats per minute," Rick explains, "and puts an impact load on the stick as if it were actually being played. We also do rimshot testing by mounting a snare drum underneath. Talk about *loud!* This machine taught us a lot about tip performance, and more about fatigue life."

Much of a drumstick's performance has to do with the sound it produces. How did Rick go about testing that? "We have a machine that 'fires' a stick down onto a drum," he replies, "and then measures the impact of the sound coming into a very special microphone as an electrical voltage. It also reads out the dB level, and the frequencies within the sound. We compare that against readings for wood sticks, and we've determined that we have a crisper sound on rimshots. Of course, sound is a subjective thing,

and that's why I'm not trying to shove graphs down anybody's throat. We used testing to get to where we are. From that point we sent the sticks out to players. According to people like Bob Rock and the sound techs for Guns N' Roses and Motley Crue, rimshots come through on the records a lot better than with wood sticks. The tom sound is also much better, the cymbal sound is better, and the hi-hats are about equal."

### Models

Easton entered the market with medium- to large-size sticks—geared primarily for the rock 'n' roll market. This was a deliberate move, as Rick explains. "For low-impact playing our sticks are just about even with wood in performance," he says. "But when you start to really lay into the drums and to deflect the sticks, you start taking advantage of the properties of aluminum that wood just can't match—especially in the area of stick shock. Our VRS system makes the sticks much better on a drummer's hands. We've received a lot of letters from drummers saying that their hands feel much better after switching to our sticks.

"I didn't jump right in with a 5A," Rick continues, "because most guys who play 5As aren't the heavy players. But we're now offering a 5A model so those drummers can take advantage of the sound and performance. We're also just getting into the marching market—and getting some really good field feedback. What we brought to the party there is not only performance, but long life span. We wanted a stick that would last a whole season. And then there's the VRS advantage again. With marching sticks, you *really* have to worry about shock to the hands. Kids in high school are getting tendonitis, and that's a serious issue."

"I also insisted on having an extra pair of replacement covers in every package of sticks," Rick continues, "just to let people know that they *should* replace the covers when they get chewed up. The cores will last a long time if you keep your covers fresh. We don't make any profit on the replacement covers; we just sell them to support the stick product. It's the same with replacement tips and blend rings."

After all his efforts at development and his attention to design details, Rick Grossman still came up against the inevitable problem of drummer acceptance. "The hardest problem I have with this product is getting people to try it," he admits. "When I first started, there were a lot of skeptics—buddies of mine—who said the sticks just didn't sound right. I'd have them turn around, and then I'd play with both aluminum and wood sticks. The guys who were the most skeptical would almost invariably be wrong about which was which. But it's human nature to oppose change. Fortunately for us, once drummers *do* try our sticks, they usually change their minds and play them."

Perhaps one impediment to drummer acceptance is the initial cost of the sticks, which is several times higher than that of wood sticks. Of course, *Ahead* sticks should *last* several times longer, as well. But Rick believes that drummers should also take the unique nature of the sticks into consideration when determining their

value.

"We're not making big profit margins on the sticks," says Rick, "because we want to see the project grow. The cost of making our sticks is between five and ten times more expensive than that of making wood sticks. This product line involves technologies of molding, precision screw machining, and special parts construction and assembly. There are probably about thirty different steps involved. The most complicated wooden stick operations involve about ten steps."

"I am a drummer," Rick concludes. "I believe in what my hands tell me—and what other drummers tell me—beyond all the high-tech testing. I'll take a drummer's judgment—as long as it's unbiased—over anything else, because *we drummers* are computers and our *hands* are machines. We know what feels good. I know that the wood drumstick companies make good products, because I've tested them all. But none of them will ever come close to our consistency in weight and balance, our strength and durability, and our overall performance. They can't do it using an organic material. Wood is not a bad drumstick material. It's just not the best anymore."



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# Drum Charts For The Live Band

by Steve Snodgrass

In the August '92 issue of *MD*, Kenny Aronoff discussed the advantages of making drum charts for studio sessions. I use a similar chart-making process in live band situations and find it an indispensable tool. I'd like to share some of these techniques with those of you who like the idea but aren't sure how to proceed.

In order to keep this article reasonable in length, a general familiarity with musical terms and notation is assumed. If you don't have this knowledge yet, ask your drum teacher—or better yet, take an introductory music theory course. The more you know, the easier this gets! (Gregg Bissonette's *Playing, Reading, And Soloing With A Band* video from DCI is also recommended if you're not accustomed to reading and writing drum music.)

## Benefits

I've encountered some drummers who are dead set against drum charts and insist that pure memorization is the best way to play in a live band. I have nothing against memorization, but consider the benefits of making a drum chart: It exercises your reading and writing skills; it helps you learn a song; it makes it easier for you to work with your band in composing and arranging original songs (and rearranging covers); it reminds you of specific figures, dynamics, etc. that you might otherwise neglect or forget in the heat of performing; it can help you put a song back on track after a mixup by giving you a "road map" with reference points shared by other musicians; and, if necessary, it helps a substitute drummer sit in successfully with little or no rehearsal. For me, these benefits more than justify the time and effort invested in making a chart!

## Format

Okay, so where do you start? As you will see, I have several different methods of building a chart, but the first step is always to obtain a recording of the song. A compact disc is the most desirable format because of the easy cueing capabilities, but a cassette will do just fine. If possible I also try to obtain a lyric sheet or even a published piano/vocal arrangement of the song. The latter does cost money but usually cuts my work in half. If a song and its drum part are simple enough, I sometimes use one of these pre-existing formats as a shortcut chart, adding notes in the margins or elsewhere if necessary. More often than not, though, I end up making my own from scratch.

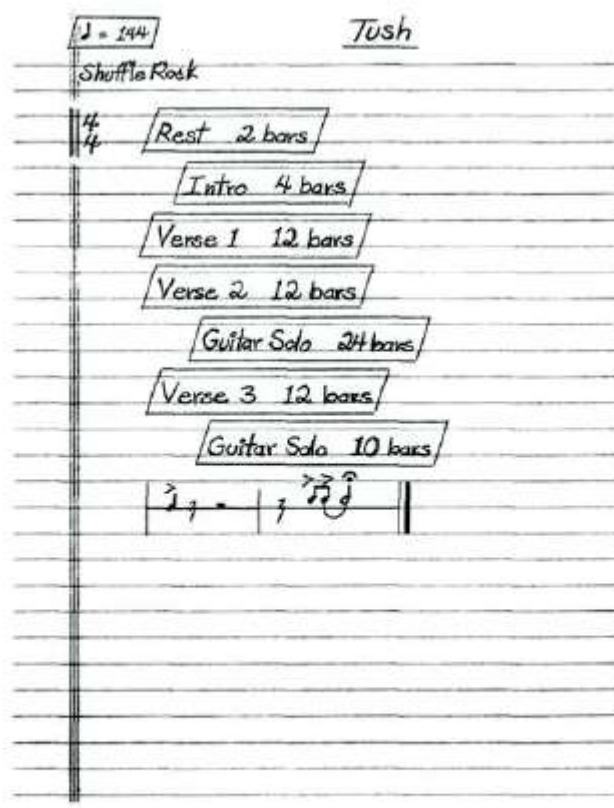
My own drum charts fall into five categories: Reminder, Structure, Detail, Hybrid, and Verbatim. I usually don't know which category I will use until I listen to the song several times and make some decisions about what my drum part should be (and how closely I wish to copy the record). I'll show you examples of all five categories; you'll learn by experience which ones are most appropriate for you in different situations.

I always start with a sheet of white or yellow letter-sized, lined notebook paper and a medium ball-point or felt-tip pen. I avoid

music staff paper at this stage, since it allows little flexibility and can get cluttered easily—although I may end up using it on the final version.

The first step is to write the song title in large letters at the top-right corner. Using a metronome, I determine the starting tempo of the song from the recording and write it clearly in the top left corner for reference. (Under the pressure of a live performance, correct tempos can be difficult to conjure up accurately from memory alone, and a seriously incorrect one can be disastrous!) The meter and any notes on the rhythmic feel of the song (driving rock, slightly swung, slow shuffle, etc.) should appear below the tempo, marking the beginning of the road map to the song.

The chart for ZZ Top's "Tush" is an example of my Reminder category, where only a simple verbal outline of the song's flow is given. It's a short, twelve-bar blues song with little variation, and it's easy to remember, so the Reminder format is perfect. Notice that I did mark the song's ending rhythm, though, since it's a unison break and crucial to achieving a solid ending with the rest of the band. (Remember to think of your possible sub drummers!)



For Eddie Money's "No Control," I use the Structure format. Sections of the song are defined by vertical bar lines separating a horizontal line with the number of measures written in the middle and section titles in boxes directly above. This Structure format is close to the Reminder in its simplicity, but the lines give a stronger visual map of the music. It also provides a kind of "skeleton" on which you can add additional notes to yourself such as the "Fill" cues (which I've circled to differentiate from section titles). The lines also allow standard notational devices, such as the double bars for section grouping and the repeat signs with first, second, and third endings used to map out the last three choruses of this tune. I mark the repeat signs heavily so there's no confusion about where to return.

**No Control**

**Medium Rock**

**Structure Chart:**

- Intro: 8 measures
- Verse 1: 8 measures
- Fill: 2 measures
- Verse 2: 8 measures
- Fill: 4 measures
- Chorus 1: 8 measures
- Fill: 2 measures
- Verse 3: 8 measures
- Chorus 2: 8 measures
- Guitar Solo: 16 measures
- Chorus 3/4/5: 6 measures
- 1, 2 measures
- 3 measures

The Pretenders' "Middle Of The Road" is an example of a song where I'd use the Detail format, which is basically a Structure chart with much more detail. Note the written-out drum solo in the first five measures; I use the horizontal line for the snare drum with the bass drum below, with high and low toms just above and below the line, respectively.

The first measure of Verse 1 spells out the desired drum pattern for that section, followed by repeat signs and notes on the number of bars to save space and eye strain. Chorus 1 illustrates a notational device often seen in big band drum charts: Important rhythmic figures played by other instruments are written above the line and slightly smaller. I kick these accents with the band but not always the same way, so I chose to omit any specific drum parts

here except for the downbeat snare stroke that sets up the figure. The band rests on beat 1, and the notated snare kick reminds me that I need to hit it hard. Other parts specifically written out include the unison 8th-note patterns on snare and low tom, which occur at the end of the choruses. These are drum solos whose accent patterns I wanted to play exactly as recorded.

Note the dynamic markings under different song sections. There are several volume changes in this tune, including an extremely important *crescendo* and sudden drop to *mezzo-piano* at the end of Chorus 3. With the dynamics written out and a verbal note added above, I never miss it!

Other verbal notes in this chart include a direction to switch from hi-hat to ride cymbal in the guitar solo section and a vocal cue at the *mezzo-piano* section before verse 3.

**Middle Of The Road**

**Forest Rock**

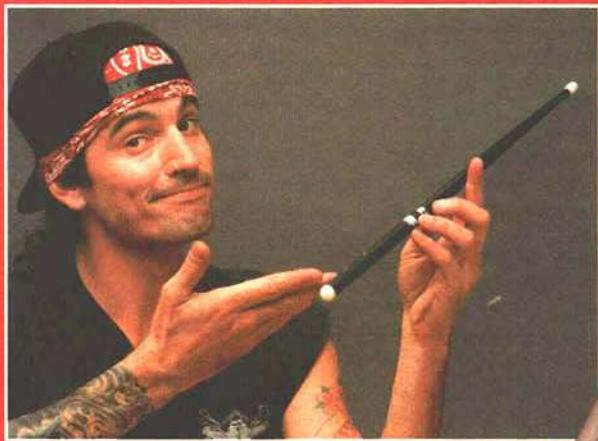
**Detail Chart:**

- Verse 1: 8 measures
- Chorus 1: 8 measures
- Solo: 16 measures
  - To done
  - Fill
  - Chorus 3

For "Galileo," by Indigo Girls, I opted for a kind of in-between notational approach, which I call the Hybrid format. It's really a Structure chart with "footnotes" giving specific parts at the bottom of the page. In this case the circled numbers refer me to the different basic snare and bass patterns to be used in a given section, as written out over the corresponding numbers in the footnotes below. This kind of shorthand leaves the body of the chart less cluttered, with more room for other instructions. I wanted to include a lot of vocal cues for myself on "Galileo," and this

# If a better way to play comes along, what are you gonna do, ignore it?

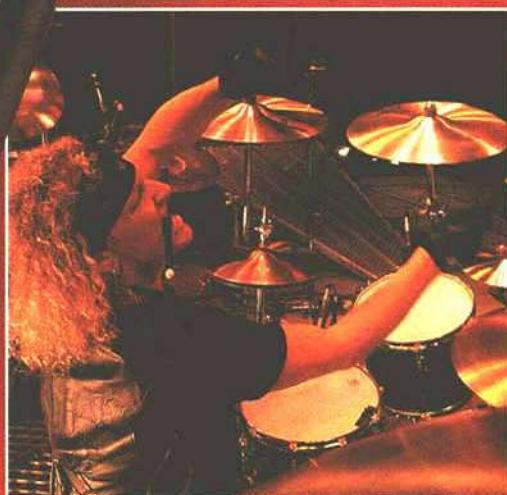
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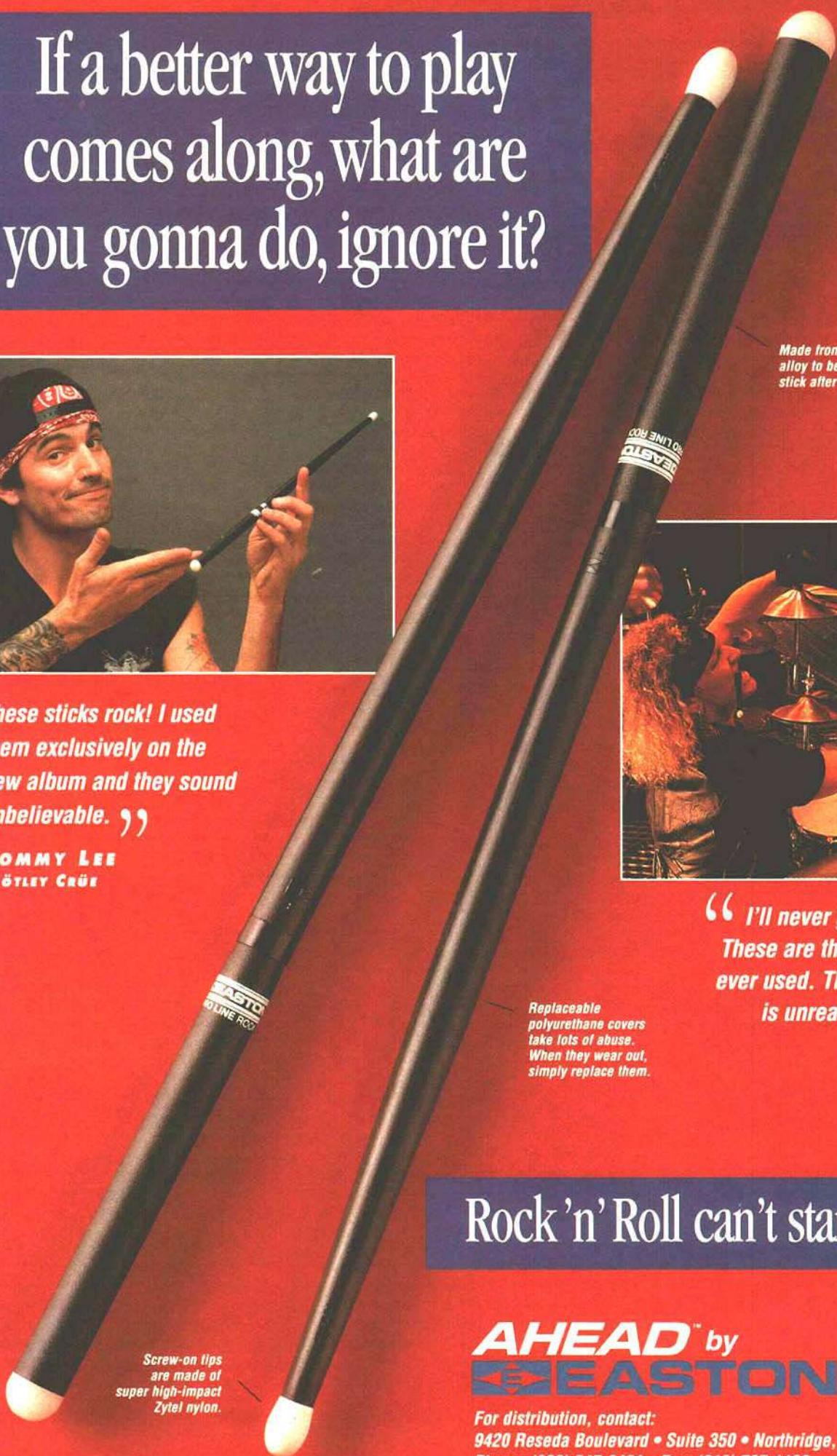


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method gave me the most room to do it.

The last of my five categories is the Verbatim chart. It needs no further explanation here, as it is simply an exact transcription of the desired drum part, like those that appear regularly in this magazine. I rarely use this method because of the large amount of time required, but sometimes you or your band may want to duplicate a hit record as closely as possible, and unless you have a photographic memory, the Verbatim chart is the best way of ensuring that. Precise transcription can also be helpful in figuring out and practicing a complicated part. And, like all the chart formats, it can help you learn a song quicker by forcing you to examine its structure and by giving you a visual "picture" of the composition as a whole.

### Helpful Hints

Regardless of format, there are some other common guidelines I find helpful in constructing a chart.

Keep the horizontal-line spacing even where possible. I usually leave three notebook paper spaces between lines, as I find this gives me just the right amount of room for most notation and instructions.

Write the chart on one page if you can, but use more if needed. Don't sacrifice legibility just to save paper! Remember that you (or another drummer) will likely be reading the chart from several feet away, perhaps under less than ideal light. (If you don't have them already, I recommend investing in a sturdy professional music stand and clip light. For around fifty dollars you can get a set that should last many years.)

Try to lay out the chart logically by starting verse and chorus sections at the left margin. This makes it much easier to follow. Also leave room for additional notes you may need to add later. I guarantee it'll happen!

Be consistent in notation methods, and try to put in only what is really needed. An overloaded chart can be more burdensome than helpful.

A chart doesn't have to look perfect, only clear and legible. I usually rewrite a chart once after working the bugs out on a first draft, but I don't normally make it quite as neat as the examples shown here. Lastly, don't be afraid to devise your own formats and notation devices. My approach is hardly the last word on the subject!

### Care

So what do you do with all of your carefully written drum charts? Before you do anything else, photocopy them and keep your set of backup copies in a separate place. Few things are as frustrating as laboring to produce the perfect chart and then having to do it all over after losing your only copy. The second thing I suggest is loading the charts into three-ring plastic sleeves from your local office supply store. (Use the "archive" type to keep your charts from "transferring" onto the plastic.) Next, place them alphabetically by song title in a sturdy binder. This will protect them and give you quick access to any song on the bandstand. You may choose to file the songs by set order, but since that can change, I leave them alphabetical and keep a separate list handy as a reminder.

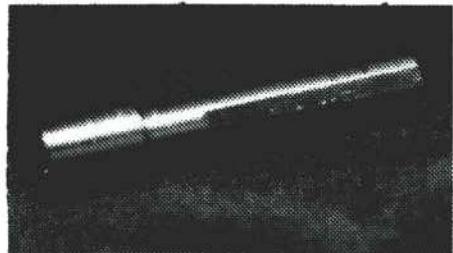
### Conclusion

Anything you can do to lessen the logistical challenges of remembering and playing a song will help you produce more consistent and musical performances. It's that freedom to focus on the song itself and my contribution as part of a cohesive musical unit that I find to be the best reason for making and using charts. Spend some time. Even if you don't always use them, I think you'll find it a worthwhile effort!

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## PAUL MOTIAN

continued from page 29

**PM:** From '58 to '64, but I played with him before that.

**KM:** What do you think made for the uniqueness of your approach?

**PM:** I think you end up sounding like the people you're playing with. I was feeding off of LaFaro and Bill.

**KM:** Was your brushwork as proficient before then?

**PM:** Kenny Clarke was a big inspiration

on my brush playing. He really turned me on. The way he played brushes was great.

I was playing in Paris with a trio of Eric Watson [piano] and Ed Schuller [bass], and Kenny Clarke came down three nights in a row, man. He stood right in front of me and watched me play the whole night. That inspired the shit out of me because years before, that's what I did with him when he was playing at the Cafe Bohemia in 1955. I was there every night, checking him out and enjoying him and listening to him and just digging his playing.

When he was in Paris those three nights in a row we talked, and I loved that. What a great feeling that was. My brush work came out of Kenny and Denzil Best, and it got a lot better when I was with Bill and Scott.

**KM:** Did you study legitimately as a kid?

**PM:** I went backwards, I think. I studied drum books, but I didn't know anything about music. I was born in Philadelphia but grew up in Providence, Rhode Island. I started playing when I was twelve, and I played in the bands in high school, but I didn't go to college. After school, I joined a territory big band and played with some small groups in clubs.

I'm writing my autobiography now. Sometimes I'll get a good sentence and throw it in the pile. This morning I found a note about one of the first bands I played with as a kid. I had just started taking drum lessons. The band had an accordion, a guitar, and me. One of the tunes we rehearsed was "Peg O' My Heart." In another band in high school—it was a quintet—we played the "Shiek Of Araby" and "Big Noise From Winnetka." That's the kind of thing we were playing back then.

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After high school I joined the Navy band. It was the Korean war and all the people my age were getting drafted and either getting killed or frostbit, or coming back with one leg. I volunteered and chose to go to the School of Music in Washington. I did a lot of listening there, and I heard a lot of records by people like Lennie Tristano, Tadd Dameron, Miles—bebop is what I came up with. When I was fifteen I heard Charlie Parker and it blew me away.

**PM:** How did your playing change before

and after you left Evans?

**PM:** Another reason I left Evans was because music was changing in New York, but I was out on the road with Bill. It just wasn't happening for me anymore with Bill—and there was *a lot* happening in New York.

I started to play with [pianist] Paul Bley and the Jazz Composer's Guild. I got to play with a lot of musicians; a lot was going on. I wanted to be part of that. I wanted to change, to get away from bebop and the standard way of playing.

**KM:** You still play that way. Your solos, for instance, don't sound like anyone else.  
**PM:** I'm sixty-two years old, man. I'm into *me* now. That's what I play. I don't give a shit if it's this or that or whatever. I'm just playing from what I'm hearing and turning myself on and getting myself from myself! [laughs]

**KM:** After Bill Evans you played with Charlie Haden's Liberation Orchestra, in '68. That must have been considered pretty avant-garde.

**PM:** Oh yeah. It was new.

**KM:** You were doing some very loose, highly independent, flowing playing that came out even more in Keith Jarrett's music.

**PM:** Wait till you hear the record I did with Keith and Gary Peacock recently, [laughs] It's almost like going backwards. I'm not doing anything but playing time.

**KM:** That's interesting, because now we have the modern hard-bop school of playing standards, as if it's 1962. And then there's the approach you and Jarrett are taking—a freer, more colorful approach.

**PM:** The tunes we do on the *Paul Motian On Broadway* albums have been around for a long time. I think what makes them different is the players and the instrumentation. Between Frisell, Lovano, Charlie Haden, Lee Konitz, and myself, no matter *what* we play it's gonna be a little different. I don't know why everyone likes *Volume HI* so much. I like *Volume II* more than any of them. And people seem to like *Monk In Motian* a lot, but for some reason I don't. I got a letter from a fan recently who wanted to know when we were going to do another Monk record.

To prepare for those records I read a lot of biographies on those composers. I was interested in what kinds of lives they led—how they approached their music. Those standard tunes were ones I felt close to because of my associations with the people I played them with. For some of those tunes the actual changes were from Bill Evans, the way we used to play them.

**KM:** *Modern Drummer* recently did a listening test with Stewart Copeland where we played him a track from *Paul Motian Live In Japan*. He really hated it. I asked what he thought about the drumming. He said, "That's probably what I'd play to some crap like that."

**PM:** [hard laughing] That's great—just too

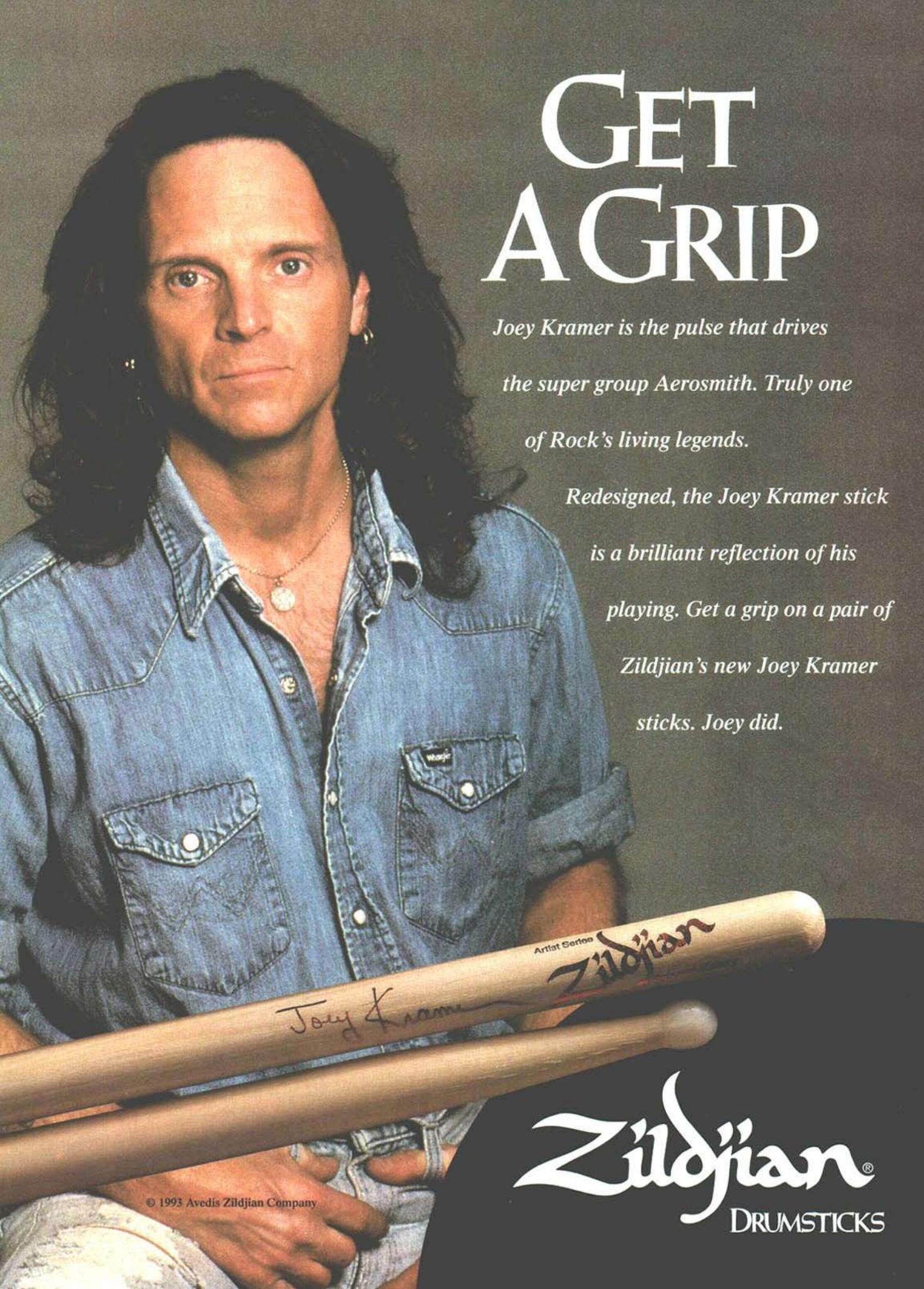
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**KM:** Have you received any negative criticism to your approach to standards?

**PM:** Well, Lenny White once said in a blindfold test that he hated my drum sound. "Sounds like the guy is playing on tin cans." But that's what I had in mind when I made the record. That's what I heard. Andre Previn [one-time conductor of the London Symphony who also released trio records with Shelly Manne] said about one of the Bill Evans' records, "I hate that drummer. He sounds like he's building the Empire State Building." [laughs] Those are

negative comments, but I like that. That's what I'm doing.

I can understand Stewart Copeland's criticism. He's coming from a totally different way of playing. You have to remember that those are my tunes and my melodies. Some of them may be crappy. I don't have anywhere near the knowledge he has of writing. He's great. But I'd like to see him make a jazz record. Let's see what he can write.

**KM:** On Keith Jarrett's *Eyes Of The Heart* and *Survivor's Suite* and on all your records, your playing is very spontaneous

and of the moment—very reactionary, no cliches. How did you get to that point?

**PM:** If I thought about it I couldn't do it. It's spontaneous. Early on I did what everyone else does: I copied the drummers I liked. I tried to play what I heard Max Roach do the night before. You practice all that, and then after a while you throw it all out and just play.

Between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one I was practicing from all these books, trying all this independence stuff. Once I got to New York and started working, that's when I dropped all of it.

There was a lot of discussion in those days on who was better—Gene Krupa or Buddy Rich. I always favored Gene Krupa, even though you'd say Buddy Rich had more technique. I heard more musical stuff from Gene, where I heard more of the drummer's drum thing from Buddy Rich. I admired Buddy—that's some fantastic shit he did—but I was never into technique. I never wanted to play faster than somebody else. Music inspired me more.

**KM:** When you solo you sound like a big kid in a sandbox. Flailing, joyful, tumbling, a lot of tom-tom oriented stuff; it's almost like rock 'n' roll.

**PM:** Other people say that too. I sound like a young kid, having fun. One time I was playing with Lennie Tristano at the Half Note. After the set he commented on the fours we played: "Man, you sound like a drunk falling down the stairs." [laughs] Another critic wrote that he thought I sounded like Baby Dodds. That's a real compliment to me. I can't be more thrilled than that.

I was playing a festival in Holland with my trio recently. This woman friend of mine heard me play a really long drum solo. She came up afterwards and said, "You played for such a long time I thought you went crazy." [laughs]

Once, when I was playing with Tony Scott opposite Charles Mingus at Lower Basin Street, Mingus told me, "Man, you sound real good. I like the way you play. You sound like you could be black or white. Charlie Parker was like that." For somebody like Charles Mingus to say that to me—man, that's great.

**KM:** Is part of that your age, because you're beyond the usual "type" that young drummers get caught up in?

**PM:** When you're first coming up, you're trying harder. You're trying to play your

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best. I still am, but I'm not as concerned now as I was then. If I play shitty one night, of course I'm going to be depressed, but it's not going to affect me as much as it would if I was trying to impress people and I was new on the scene.

**KM:** As far as free playing, how do you define that line between time-keeping and being more abstract?

**PM:** They're different things. With some of the so-called free playing, there's not the form and the changes involved when you're playing time. If I'm playing a solo on a tune, I'm following the form or the melody of the tune. With free music, as with my tunes, there's a form, but it's more abstract. Usually there's a melody that I'm playing off of, but I'm not playing a specific number of bars.

**KM:** Does playing in more of a freeform way require more concentration? You can't just sit back and keep time.

**PM:** Well, sometimes I've played my best when I haven't slept in a couple of days. The music picks me up and gives me energy. It's uplifting. There have been times when I was so tired I thought I couldn't play. Some of the best music happened during that period. I feel the most drained during recordings—it's just more pressure. I'm more exhausted after six hours in the studio than six hours on the gig.

**KM:** In your music, after the melody is stated, do you ever leave that?

**PM:** No. I still think about the melody. There's got to be something there to play off of. You're not going to be out in the air just playing anything. If it's a song, you play the song. If it's a melody, you play off the melody. If there's no melody, there will still be a form to play from. Maybe some of the stuff I'm playing sounds chaotic, but it's not.

**KM:** From your records of original compositions to the trio/quartet records of standards, does your playing change?

**PM:** Sure. Again, it's coming from what I'm hearing. If you're gonna play a Bach piece in a symphony you won't play the same as you would on a piece by Stravinsky. It's really not that complicated. I take from the people around me. If not them, I'll take it from myself.

When I start a drum solo, for instance, I don't know what I'm going to play. I'm going to strike something and some sound is going to happen and that's gonna turn me on to follow it with something else.

**KM:** How does playing without a bass, as you do in your trio, affect your drumming?

**PM:** Well, it's been done before. Look at Benny Goodman's group in the '40s. When working without a bassist you need to be more careful about how you play the bass drum. You have to become a little more thoughtful. I think working without a bassist frees you up as a drummer. But it takes some getting used to. It was hard for Bill Frisell at first. I remember talking to Jack DeJohnette, and he said, "Oh, it's a trio without a bass." That's not what it is. It's a trio, it's complete within itself.

**KM:** Working with Lovano, Frisell, Konitz, and Haden has to give you more to feed off of than with your much younger Electric Bebop Band.

**PM:** It's different. I'm feeding off of them, too, but now it's my band. I feel more responsible. I feel like I have to play great. I have to inspire the other guys.

When I played with Bill Evans, Keith Jarrett, Lennie Tristano, Oscar Pettiford, or Thelonious Monk, they'd inspire me. When it's my band it's up to me to inspire my players. I'm not going to tell them to play great. I have to do it with my playing. That's the difference.

**KM:** What was your goal of having two guitars with the Bebop Band?

**PM:** I'll have two saxophones plus the two guitars on the next record. I want to explore the possibilities. The different instrumentation inspires me to make different kinds of arrangements. I want the guitarists and the saxophonists to feed off each other, to become one instrument.

**KM:** What inspires your melodies?

**PM:** My stuff comes from fooling around at the piano, and hopefully something interesting happens. Then I'll build on that—just trial and error. If it still sounds good a few months later I'll rehearse it and record it. I think I've gotten better from record to record. Somehow, I have a melodic sense. From all the years of playing and all the music I've been exposed to throughout the years, it's influenced me.

**KM:** Has there ever been a time when you felt your playing was becoming stale?

**PM:** No. If I ever felt like that I wouldn't play anymore. I keep myself inspired by listening to music. I practice by listening to music, and I listen mostly to classical music, like the Shostakovich preludes and fugues that Keith Jarrett recorded. I thought those were great.

**KM:** Since you say you practice by listening, what's the most important thing drummers approaching bebop or standards should consider?

**PM:** They must consider what has come before. They should listen to some of the earlier drummers, like Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Art Blakey, Chick Webb, and Baby Dodds. What about Jo Jones? He made a record where he impersonated all the other drummers. I like a lot of the early Stan Kenton stuff with Shelly Manne, too.

**KM:** Finally, with such a long and varied career behind you, does any one night stand out in your memory?

**PM:** Playing with Bill Evans and Scott LaFaro at the Sutherland Lounge in Chicago. We were the only so-called whites in the place. Bill Evans played "Round About Midnight," and it brought tears to my eyes. That's the only time that happened. It was beautiful.

*Thanks goes to Fred Cohen of the Jazz Record Center, New York City, for help with the records mentioned in the article.*



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## Vinnie Colaiuta

by Mark Griffith

Vinnie Colaiuta is one of today's most talented and creative drummers. His rhythmic concept, timekeeping, and originality are among his strongest musical tools. However, when listening to the musically diverse and mature Colaiuta, it can be difficult to get an accurate grasp of who he is as a musician. It is for that reason that we will examine the vast recordings of one of drumming's most innovative artists.

Vinnie's first exposure was with the Frank Zappa band, with which he played on the show-like *Joe's Garage*, Parts 1, 2, and 3 (now available as *Joe's Garage: The Complete Version*). This record finds the band playing vamps behind a story that is being told by members of the Zappa band, as well as playing typical Zappa tunes. Musically, it could be described best as a Broadway show with story and music by Frank Zappa. Vinnie also played on the live record *Tinseltown Rebellion* and on the multi-volumed *Shut Up 'N' Play Yer Guitar*. Shortly before his passing, Zappa re-mastered and released several high-quality bootleg recordings on compact disc. Two of these discs—*Saarbrucken 1979* and *Anyway The Wind Blows*—are great examples of how Vinnie sounded with the working Zappa band.

Soon after the Zappa experience, Vinnie began working with esoteric songwriter Joni Mitchell. He played on six tunes from her acclaimed *Wild Things Run Fast*, the entire *Dog Eat Dog* record, and five tunes on *Night Ride Home*. This band was also captured on the live video *Refuge Of The Road*.

Throughout his career, Vinnie has been involved in many pop music sessions. One of the first was the Gino Vanelli record *Nightwalker*. The music on the disc may now sound a little dated, but the grooves are solid, original, and deep. Sounding Gadd-like and very tasteful, Vinnie brings the songs to life. Also listen to the Commodores' *Nightshift* and Kenny Pore's *At This Moment*.

More recently, Vinnie played on the terrific record *The Works*, by English songwriter Nik Kershaw. Kershaw's voice and songs sound similar to Howard Jones. The whole record has Vinnie playing to a sequenced bass part, but that's not how it sounds. (Compliments to the programmer, as well as to Vinnie.) The music is well-produced, well-written, and well-played. There are a variety of grooves and time signatures, resulting in a very creative outing by Vinnie.

For the same type of supportive drumming, listen to Wang Chung's *Warmer Side Of Cool*. This is a slickly produced pop record that had little commercial success—certainly not due to the musical performance, though. This record has Vinnie aggressively popping backbeats and playing half-time vamps in a very musical fashion.



The latest from Brazilian pop-star Ivan Lins, *Awa Yio*, offers Vinnie playing Brazilian pop music. The record doesn't offer much authentic Brazilian music, but this does not detract from its greatness.

The bluesy pop of Robben Ford's *Talk To Your Daughter*, the poppy *Last Days Of The Century* from Englishman Al Stewart, and the ever-tasteful Tony Banks' (from Genesis) *Still* are also wonderful examples of good music and great drumming. Ford's record features a lot of shuffles, backbeats, and syncopated figures to sink your teeth into. Vinnie's playing on all of these sessions is spirited and propulsive.

Colaiuta has often participated in large-ensemble, movie-soundtrack-like recordings. Clare Fischer's *Blues Trilogy*, Patrick Williams' *Dreams And Themes*, and Claus Ogerman's *Featuring Michael Brecker* are all very arranged, orchestrated recordings of this type. We can hear Vinnie probably reading charts and making music in a different setting from the aforementioned pop dates, while still sounding unique. Bill Meyers' *Images* is this same type of project, but was recorded live. It features wonderful compositions, burning solos, and spirited group interaction.

Vinnie has most often been associated with aggressive West

Coast fusion—in which he is sometimes featured. Steve Tavaglione's *Blue Tav*, Mike Landau's *Tales From The Bulge*, Allan Holdsworth's *Secrets*, and the live *Los Lobotomies* recordings are all of this type. They are very aggressive, open-blowing, for-musicians-only types of recordings that defy explanation. Vinnie is also on all three of John Patitucci's GRP releases (four tunes on the first, three on the second, and five on the third). These are all great records, but specific tunes like the uptempo Latin "Baja Bajo," the reggae "Kingston Blues," and the open-ended "Spaceships" and "Scofile" are definite drumming highlights.

## Tracking Them Down

Here's a list of the albums mentioned in this month's column, including label and catalog number information. Following the list are several sources you might want to check for hard-to-find releases.

**Frank Zappa:** *Joe's Garage: The Complete Version*, Rykodisc RCD10060; *Tinseltown Rebellion*, Barking Pumpkin PW237336; *Shut Up 'N' Play Yer Guitar*, Rykodisc, 10028; *Saarbucken*, Fooeee R270543; *Any Way The Wind Blows*, Fooeee R270541. **Joni Mitchell:** *Wild Things Run Fast*, Geffen 2019; *Dog Eat Dog*, Geffen GHS24074; *Night Ride Home*, Geffen GEFD24302. **Gino Vanelli:** *Nightwalker*, Arista ARCD8186. **The Commodores:** *Nightshift*, Motown MCD06124MD. **Kenny Pore:** *At This Moment*, TBA Records TB226. **Nik Kershaw:** *The Works*, MCA DMCF3438. **Wang Chung:** *The Warmer Side Of Cool*, Geffen 924222. **Ivan Lins:** *Awa Yio*, Reprise 926499. **Robben Ford:** *Talk To Your Daughter*, Warner Bros. 925647. **Al Stewart:** *Last Days Of The Century*, Enigma D273316. **Tony Banks:** *Still*, Virgin CDV2858. **Clare Fischer:** *Blues Trilogy*, Discovery DSCD936. **Patrick Williams:** *Dreams And Themes*, Allegiance AV443. **Claude Ogerman:** *Claude Ogerman Featuring Michael Brecker*, GRP GRD9632. **Bill Meyers:** *Images*, Spindletop SPT114. **Steve Tavaglione:** *Blue Tav*, Sohbi SFB1006. **Mike Landau:** *Tales From The Bulge*, Sohbi SFB1004. **Allan Holdsworth:** *Secrets*, Intima 773328. **Los Lobotomies:** *Los Lobotomies*, Sohbi SFB1002. **John Patitucci:** *John Patitucci*, GRP GRD9560; *On The Come*, GRP GRD9583; *Sketchbook*, GRP GRD9617. **Eric Marienthal:** *Voices From The Heart*, GRP GRD9563. **Tom Scott:** *Desire*, Elektra 60162; *Flashpoint*, GRP GRD9571. **Brandon Fields:** *Other Places*, Nova 9025; *The Traveler*, Nova 8811. **Pat Kelly:** *High Heels*, Denon CJ73764. **David Sanborn:** *Close Up*, Reprise 925715. **Malta:** *High Pressure*, JVC JD3303. **Bunny Brunei:** *Dedication*, Musicdisc MU500362. **Buell Niedlinger:** *Big Drum*, K2B2 23069. **Sting:** *Ten Summoners Tales*, A&M AM314540070. **ON VIDEO:** **Joni Mitchell:** *Refuge Of The Road*. **Sting:** *Unplugged*; *Soul Cages Live*; *Ten Summoners Tales*.

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For some lighter fusion, listen to Vinnie playing on Eric Marienthal's *Voices Of The Heart*, Tom Scott's *Desire* and *Flashpoint*, Pat Kelly's *High Heels*, Brandon Fields' *Other Places* and *The Traveler*, David Sanborn's *Close Up*, and Malta's *High Pressure*.

More recently, Vinnie has played on acoustic jazz records by bassists Bunny Brunei (*Dedication*) and Buell Niedlinger (*Big Drum*). *Dedication* finds the group playing standards as well as tunes by Wayne Shorter and Chick Corea. *Big Drum* is a freer record with no chordal instruments. It features open solos, compositions with odd forms, and free blowing on Monk-ish tunes. This is a great record. Also listen to Eric Marienthal's highly acoustic *Crossroads*.

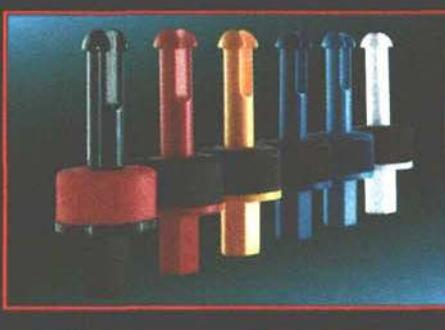
All of Vinnie Colaiuta's recordings and styles—as well as his recent work in Sting's band on *Ten Summoners Tales* (disc and live-in-session video) and the videos *Unplugged* and *Soul Cages Live*—may start to give you an accurate grasp of who this remarkable musician is. Or it may confuse you even further. Either way, there is an education to be had from listening to the creative and musical Mr. Colaiuta.





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The answer to spending large sums on a trap case is to build one yourself. If you're not into major carpentry, there's a short-cut available. Pick your favorite wholesale outlet, like Home Depot or Price Club, and look for the heavy, molded-plastic tool chests designed to fit in the bed of a pickup truck just behind the cab. They're usually lockable, and they're made in several sizes (so as to fit the different sizes of trucks), so you should have some selection. When you decide on the size you want, buy a sheet (or perhaps just a half-sheet) of 1/2" plywood for a base plate, and some casters/wheels to attach to it. (Pick the kind that best suit your needs as to size, swivel/non-swivel capability, etc.) Then purchase the nuts and bolts you'll need to assemble the parts together. The only tools you should need are an electric drill and a crescent wrench or pair of pliers. My case took only forty-five minutes to build and cost only \$60. It's durable—and it can double as an ice chest if I need one!

M. Colon  
Vallejo, CA

## ELIMINATING SNARE BUZZ

*Editor's note: This item exceeds our normal length limitation for entries in Drumline. But we found it original and interesting, and felt that it should be presented in its entirety for the sake of clarity.*

After reading "MD's Guide To Drumset Tuning" in the February '94 issue, I was moved to share my solution for sympathetic snare buzz. My playing situations put me in close proximity to the audience, and I accompany a vocalist, so snare buzz has been one of my big problems. I admit to being one of those drummers who used duct tape as described in the article to sub-

due the buzz. However, I have since discovered a better method. My technique consists of weaving three pieces of leather shoelace (the kind with a square cross-section, often found on hiking boots and sometimes referred to as a "thong") into the snare strands.

Loosen the snares completely, and put the strainer in the "off" position. Weave the shoelace through the snares so that one wire strand is on one side of the leather and the adjacent strand is on the other side. After you've woven through all the strands, straighten the shoelace and position it so that it's perpendicular to the snares. Cut off the excess length, leaving about 1/2" on either side of the snares. I find that three strips of shoelace, spaced about equally along the length of the snare set, produce the best results. (Note: The middle strip is woven opposite to the outer two. That is, a wire strand will be on the same side of the two outer strips of shoelace, but on the opposite side of the middle strip.)

After the leather strips have been woven and positioned in the snare strands, tighten the snares. Moving the strips closer together or farther apart for a given snare tension will produce a different snare response, so you'll have to experiment with the location of the strips to get the sound you want and to eliminate the buzz. The response of the snares is proportional to the distance between the strips. Moving the strips half an inch either way makes a substantial difference.

My interpretation of the dynamics of this system is that the shoelace strips bind the snare strands together so that they don't act as independently as they normally would. Additionally, when the laces are woven into the strands, the amount of snare wire in contact with the head is reduced. Consequently, more tension is required to get a response from the snares. This results in a snare response that is somewhat tight and "choked." Because portions of the leather are also forced against the bottom head, some muffling of that head results. If the batter head is also muffled, there will be virtually no sustain in the drum. This can be very beneficial in terms of reducing unwanted ring and eliminating snare buzz.

Admittedly, I've only used this tech-

nique for about four months—on two different snare drums—so I don't know what the long-term effects are on the snares. It's possible that the leather strips may deform the wire strands. At this point, the only disadvantage I'm aware of is that you now have the location of the strips as one more variable to include (along with head tension, muffling, and snare tension) in your drum-tuning manipulations.

Weaving a shoelace into the snares produces a better sound than does taping the snares to the bottom head. (Tape will also leave adhesive residue on the head and the snare wires.) Most importantly, the shoelace technique still allows you to "throw off the snares," whereas duct tape holds the snares to the head even when the strainer is in the "off" position. I've tried all kinds of tape in all kinds of applications, and nothing comes close to the results I've obtained with my leather shoelaces.

T.J. Benekos  
Tucson, AZ

## CREATE A PRACTICE BOOK

Tired of tripping on all those back issues of *Modern Drummer* that hang around your set so you can practice those hip articles? The following suggestion will help organize your practice routine and create a valuable, personalized practice tool.

Pack up your selected *MDs* and head to your local office supply store. Purchase a three-ring binder (\$2) and a box of three-hole clear document protectors (\$5). Next, photocopy all of those columns you've been working on. Then slip each one into a protector and insert it into the binder. You've just started your own personal drum book.

I've found it helpful to further organize the material by grouping similar articles together in the binder. The binder I started several years ago has now grown to over seventy pages, and I am never at a loss for practice material.

Mark Mahoney  
North Conway, NH

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## THE DRUMMERS OF CUBA

ological one—it is a very conscious effort of all Cuban drummers to delve into our African roots. I've tried to continue applying percussive styles and patterns to the drumset. My main focus and forte is Cuban popular music through my work with traps and timbales.

**G. Barreto:** I grew up listening to the bata player, and so with that concept I developed my concepts. With experience and information and the time to experiment, I became dedicated to drumming. I was exposed to a lot of bata playing, and that became my guide. I would listen to the okonkolo patterns against the itotele and Iya and would use things accordingly. You begin to pick out rhythms and subconsciously begin to use them in your playing. I did not study or plan it step by step. I heard it and used it right away.

**MD:** Do you have a specific method you've developed for adapting traditional folkloric rhythms to the drumset?

**Quintana:** Not really, but I do have a single-hand technique I've developed for conga drums called "La Mano Secreta" (The Secret Hand). But I am working on other techniques for two hands.

The main thing is to work with your particular ensemble to evenly distribute the parts. For example, if you have a drummer and one percussionist, the drummer can play clave, cascara, and bombo, while the conga player plays the guaguancó melody, and the quinto as well. Remember that not only Cuban drummers have the richness of the African presence in our music—North Americans have it as well.

**MD:** Who do you think are among the most important figures in Cuban drumming, as far as the development of the drumset is concerned?

**J. Barreto:** In the '40s it was Guillermo Barreto. He played with Orquesta Riverside, Beny More, and Duke Ellington.

**Quintana:** Guillermo Barreto, Walfredo Reyes, Sr., and Daniel Perez are the three most important in my opinion, as far as their individual interpretations and their mixing of other styles, such as swing, into Cuban popular music.

**MD:** Tell us something of your drumming influences.

**J. Barreto:** I was inspired by Elvin Jones,

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Art Blakey, Max Roach, Tony Williams, Changuito, and Barreto.

**G. Barreto:** First, my uncle Guillermo Barreto gave me recordings of American drummers like Shelly Manne and Buddy Rich. After that I began to listen to more contemporary drummers, of which three are my favorite: Peter Erskine, Dave Weckl, and "the dad," as we call him here, Steve Gadd.

**Garcia:** In my forty-four years, I have been greatly influenced and inspired by drummers such as Tony Williams, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and especially Jack DeJohnette, who I think influenced many drummers in terms of his expressiveness. Also Steve Gadd, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, Dennis Chambers, Peter Erskine, Gregg Bissonette...I'd also love to meet Alex Acuna and Robby Ameen...there are so many.

**Quintana:** My father, Pedro Luis Quintana, "Perojo," who played with the Tropicana orchestra and many other groups, was my inspiration. My mother and her family were also very musical, particularly in Cuban lyric music and opera. But as far as my development as a percussionist, I would have to say that my main influences were my father, my uncle Roberto, Alberto Marquez, who was the bongo player with the Beny More Orchestra, Jorge Fon, Papi Cadavieco, who played with Stan Kenton, Tito Puente, Orquesta Broadway, and La Lupe.

My uncle Roberto gave me my first instrument: a set of un-tunable bongos. I used to heat the skins in order to tune them, and I was never happy with the sound. One time, I heated them until they broke! My father played in a military band and always had a snare drum lying around. So I would make up my own rhythms combining congas and bongos with the snare.

**Mullens:** Of the people I've tried to emulate, one is Luis Palau, an excellent drummer and the uncle of Walfredo Reyes, Jr., for whom I also have a great deal of respect. I met Walfredo, Sr. when I was very young; I was working at the Hotel Nacional with Leonardo Timor's band. Guillermo Barreto—the master—is the father of all drummers in Cuba. I must also mention Changuito, who has influenced all Cuban percussionists.

I've tried to mix all of these influences with my own flavor, so that people know

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it's me when they hear me. I like to work a lot with the trap set and timbales. I've always tried to fuse these elements within Cuban music, and have always enjoyed working this way.

For me, the timbales represent the authentic aspect or signature of Cuban popular music, and the drums represent the strength and the dynamic possibilities within the ensemble. I'm also very influenced by Buddy Rich, and Alex Acuna—I love the way he incorporates Latin percussion. I have a lot of Weather Report's recordings, and the most recent recording of his I enjoy is with his band, the Unknowns.

**MD:** What about Cuban drummers?

**Garcia:** I like them all, including those who have studied with me. It's important to note that most Cuban drummers have really attempted to develop their own unique sound, combining the traditional patterns in our music with their own concepts. This is a very important artistic manifestation. This is what makes art different than sports: The individual aesthetic is of much more value, and even though we are all essentially doing the same thing, we do

it differently.

**MD:** What do you think about the concept of clave in other styles of music?

**J. Barreto:** It's more than a pattern or a rhythm. The clave is in the drums...you have to feel it inside. It's got to have its own swing, but you have to feel it inside. Here in Cuba, all music has clave.

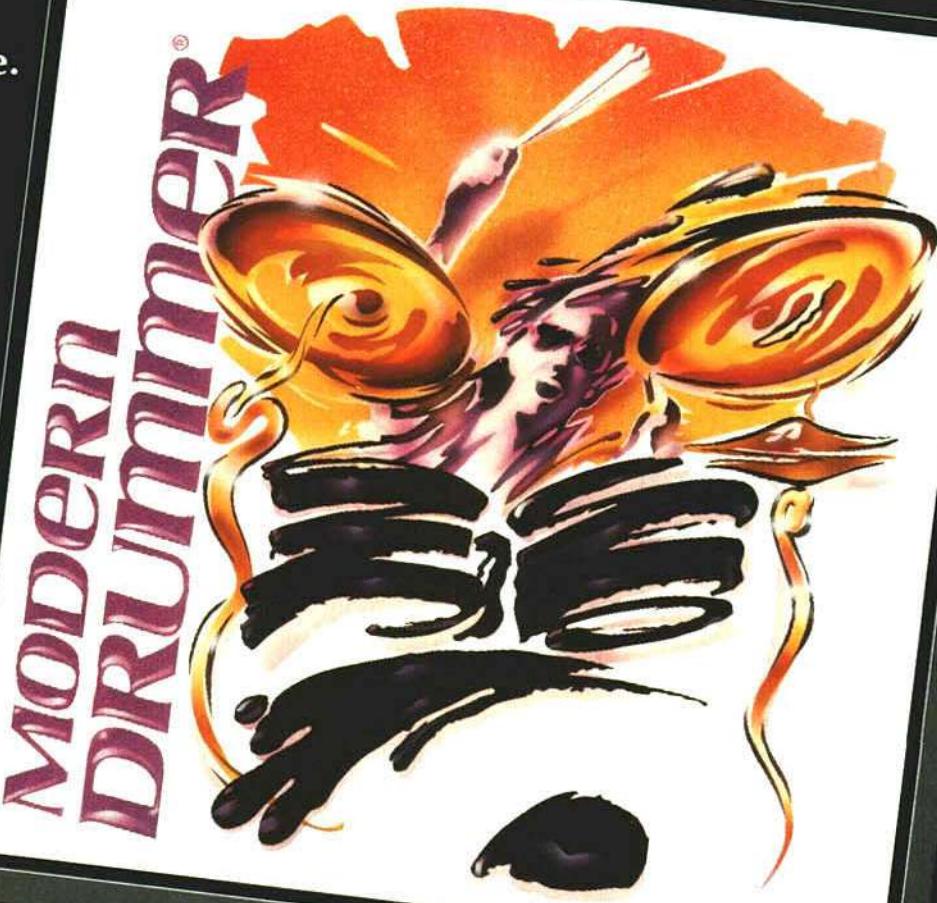
**G. Barreto:** I believe that the drummer is the leader of the percussion section. He has to guide the timbale and conga players. Therefore the clave has to become an internal part of your being. It must be felt. There's no going in or out of it because it will disrupt the flow of the rhythm section.

**MD:** What is the advantage for Cuban musicians to playing in clave?

**Quintana:** I once had a conversation with [pianist] Jorge Millet about the clave and its relationship to drumming patterns in the guaguancó [style of Cuban rumba]. He asked why the "segundo" falls on the two-side of clave, and not on the three-side, as one would naturally expect [and as many musicians have often incorrectly interpreted]. I said, "Because that's the way it is! It may sound 'wrong' musically, but it's right."

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with the clave because it creates a balance."

When I hear guaguancó played wrong, I feel tremendous anxiety! This is what worries me, and it's why I want to share this information with all drummers and percussionists. The clave has its rules and they must be respected.

**Garcia:** The clave's role with the drumset is as important as with the percussion. But you know, drummers in general don't know that much about this music. The basic instruments in Cuban music are the tumbadoras [conga drums], bongos, and timbales. In traditional styles, drums are incorporated or adapted to ensembles including percussion, in order to interpret the rhythms by "filling in the gaps," so to speak. This gives the rhythm more "swing." If the drums try to take on a principal role, it's not the same.

**Mullens:** This is a very complex issue. Ultimately, clave must be felt. Everyone knows that "pa pa, pau pa pa" [sings and claps rumba clave] is the Cuban clave—fine. Now, a percussionist who does not know clave cannot play this music. All music has its own sort of clave.

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—Kenny Aronoff



I am proud to say that I belong to the PAS an organization of drummers, for drummers. The PAS celebrates the drum, and makes possible the sharing of so much knowledge, in both education and music industry worlds. I urge you to join and support the membership of this most valuable society.

—Peter Erskine

As a young kid I was really into being in different 'clubs' with my friends. As a big kid, what could be cooler than being a member of a 'club' or society of percussionists from all over the world!! Whether you are a little kid or a big kid, I urge you to join PAS and to be forever a student of the drum.

—Gregg Bissonette



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**MD:** Son clave versus rumba clave: Why do you play one or the other?

**J. Barreto:** It all depends on the type of song. There are songs that have son clave and there are songs that have rumba clave. The reason for the difference is the difference in "sabor," or flavor, of each tune. When you change the clave you change the sabor of the song.

**MD:** We've noticed your use of jazz influences and other modern concepts in your arrangements of popular dance music. You have broken away from the strictly traditional approach, which is a breath of fresh air. How do you account for this?

**G. Barreto:** The Cuban musician is always experimenting, and that is well-received here. Creativity is constant. There are the basics in all styles, but the leaders here will always let you try things. If it works, great. If not, try something else. Leaders are pretty flexible here. You have to do what works best.

**MD:** Changing the rules seems to be something done on a regular basis in Cuba.

**Menendez:** The whole existence of the revolution meant that it was okay to change the rules—changing the way work is done, how we're paid. Were also changing the way music is studied.

**MD:** If you were to teach a class in an American city and you were going to give your students your feeling for clave, what would you share with them?

**J. Barreto:** In North America everything is analyzed. "This is songo, this is rock, this is swing." Here it's different. Here the music develops. The most important thing is that clave cannot be crossed.

**G. Barreto:** First, I'd play some music for the class to listen to and explain how the clave works. Listening is the key.

**Garcia:** Listen to Latin music first! Then study the conga drums and their patterns with the clave. I'm working on a Cuban drumming method book now. Hopefully I can publish it some day.

Mullens: I agree one should listen to a lot of Cuban music! You must understand the clave's relationship to all of the rhythmic patterns in the ensemble, and know—and above all, *feel*—how the clave fits. To be "in clave" is not only a metric condition!

**MD:** What patterns would you give a student on the first day?

**Quintana:** The first thing would be the clave, then the cascara pattern, and then

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combine the two. Then I'd add the hi-hat on 2 and 4, and then the bombo [kick on the "&" of beat 2] to give it some punch. Also, I'd have them play rumba clave in one hand and the cascara pattern in the other, and switch hands, of course.

**MD:** How long have you been playing? At what age did you start?

**J. Barreto:** I've been playing for twelve years. I started when I was fifteen years old. I take elements of things I like and adapt them into my own style. Some people use them spontaneously; others create a structure, a way of developing a style and a technique using elements from the folklore. I extract elements to develop a personal style.

Frias: My whole family played music. At ten years of age I entered the music conservatory and studied classical music.

**Menendez:** In 1966, at age fourteen, I came from Oakland, California to study at the National Institute of the Arts. At that time scholarships were being offered to gifted children. There were many work opportunities, which paid a lot of money—primarily work in the cabarets. Children

were being diverted from attaining a superior level of musicianship by the work opportunities. There was also an emphasis on classical music, with no popular music being taught.

Now things have changed and popular music is being studied. Bands from the National Institute are participating in jazz and rock festivals.

**J. Barreto:** We studied in a music conservatory along with our regular education. We have a system of learning here that starts with the first three years of elementary music education, then four years at the intermediate level.

**G. Barreto:** All drummers here are trained rhythmically and harmonically. Both parts come together. Here we would study academics in the morning, and then music in the afternoon. That was every day, five or six days a week, depending on your level.

**Menendez:** In Cuba there is an elementary school in almost every neighborhood. And every province has an intermediate-level school. The National School of Art is the national-level school in the city of Havana. It is actually on the high school level. Then

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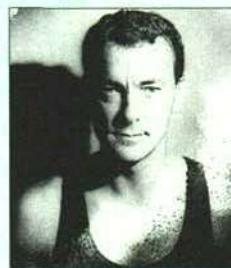
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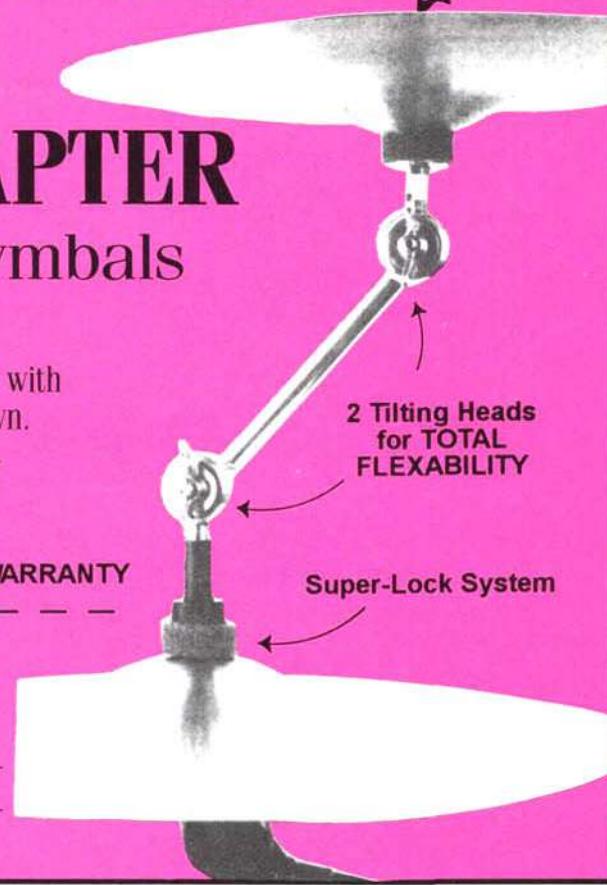
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there is the National Superior Institute of Music.

The only payment students give back to the state for this musical training is that when they graduate they spend two to three years as a teacher. It's also an exemption from the draft.

**Quintana:** I started playing on my own at age five. By age six I joined a kids band called La Pandilla de Cabeza de Perros ["The Dog's Head Gang"]. As kids, we'd compete against other bands in the neighborhood. When I was eight, my mother took me to a television show hosted by German Pinelli, where I was presented by Carlos "Patato" Valdes as the youngest "tumbador" [conga player] of Cuba.

**MD:** With whom did you study?

**Garcia:** Fausto Garcia Rivera, and the late Domingo Aragui, who taught at the Havana Symphony Orchestra. I was also very influenced by the late Guillermo Barreto, whom I had the pleasure of performing with in the Modern Music Orchestra.

**Mullens:** As a child, I banged on whatever I could find. I started studying seriously at age eight. When I was sixteen, I graduated

in classical percussion from the National Art School in Havana, and have since worked professionally. But I realize there is more to learn.

**MD:** Did you learn all the percussion instruments?

**J. Barreto:** The drumset was not included in the learning system. You are encouraged to develop your own personal style. It was my personal inclination to play drums. However, I did study marimba, timpani, and xylophone.

**G. Barreto:** In my time you only studied snare drum and timpani. Now they have drumset teachers as part of the schooling. More advanced students take other courses, like arranging, outside of school.

**Garcia:** Although I was classically trained—timpani and all mallet percussion—I always loved jazz, and I was also influenced by traditional Cuban percussion. I grew up around traditional drumming in my neighborhood. But I studied bata drumming with Oscar Valdes [Irakere's singer/percussionist]. The classical and technical training is important, but it is equally important to put that technique to work in studying other styles.

**MD:** Would you recommend that all drummers study Cuban percussion?

**Garcia:** Yes, it is very important. All of us who have taught our students drumset—particularly foreigners who have studied with me, Changuito, and others—tell the students that they must have a fundamental knowledge of Cuban percussion. This includes all of the instruments and their relationship to the clave. Often you'll see groups where the percussionists know the rhythms, but the drummer does not. It's very important for drummers to expand their knowledge in order to establish a solid relationship with their percussionists.

**MD:** How does it feel to grow up in a culture so rich with rhythm?

**J. Barreto:** I feel advantaged.

**G. Barreto:** Oh! The drums are fundamental to all music here. I think they are the most important thing.

**Menendez:** A lot of the families here in Cuba have drumming from their religions—the folklore aspect that is in their traditional culture. They now study drumming in all the traditional aspects in a very sophisticated and developed way—all the way up to symphonic percussion.

**MD:** Is there a difference between how drummers are thought of here as compared to in the United States?

**Menendez:** Definitely. I used to feel that musicians here were workers, like carpenters. But now I feel that in the last twenty years musicians have carved out a place where they are considered artists. There is job security and support from the government. You can play in one band and make a living. There are even retirement plans.

But you have to be good. In the school where I teach if you don't maintain your test scores at 85%, you're out. There is a sense that what you're doing is important.

**MD:** Changing the subject, where is songo from? What is "timba"?

**G. Barreto:** Songo's a pattern that all Cuban drummers have learned, but that has become a little old and is not widely used anymore. New patterns are constantly created and used. Songo came in part from mozambique. Timba is not a specific rhythm. It's more a saying, like, "Hey man, this timba [groove] is really happening."

**MD:** How would you describe songo's development and evolution?

**Quintana:** The first drummer of Los Van Van was Blas Egues, who actually created the first movements of what we later called "songo," in 1970. He played on a set consisting of drums—without cymbals—and a "cana brava" [similar to bamboo, but larger and thicker, mounted on a stand]. When I came into the band, I changed everything by modifying the setup to include cymbals, bells, and other percussion effects.

Daniel Diaz [drummer of Orquesta Ritmo Oriental] created a setup called "pailateria," with tom-toms, kick with a bell mount, and snare, but played beats that combined several rhythms, not called songo.

**MD:** In the U.S., there is a fascination with the songo rhythm. Why do you think that is?

**Garcia:** The songo rhythm is fascinating to American drummers because it can be easily adapted into rock idioms. But what we play now in Cuba is not called songo anymore. Each drummer plays with their own feeling, in their own way. The original rhythms are understood, but each individual adds his or her own ingredients. It's

just like jazz and rock drummers who know all of the same basic patterns, but put in their own ideas.

**MD:** Is there a pattern that has taken the place of songo?

**Quintana:** Well, essentially the roots are there, but things have been added, such as the backbeat on the snare. Take the mozambique rhythm, for example. What I've heard out there being called "mozambique" is nothing like the original. I would love to come and "clear things up"—to at least show drummers the original patterns.

It's like the book Robby Ameen wrote. What he wrote is not really songo, and people should know that. It is a mixture of all kinds of rhythms. Also, the Cuban son is traditionally not played on two congas, but on one. It is important to know the roots, then you can experiment.

**Mullens:** What you asked about songo is what all foreign musicians ask me—everyone loves songo, but here in Cuba we don't play it anymore. The new groove doesn't have a specific name. It is a fusion combining songo, rock, and other styles.

**MD:** Are there any special rudiments that

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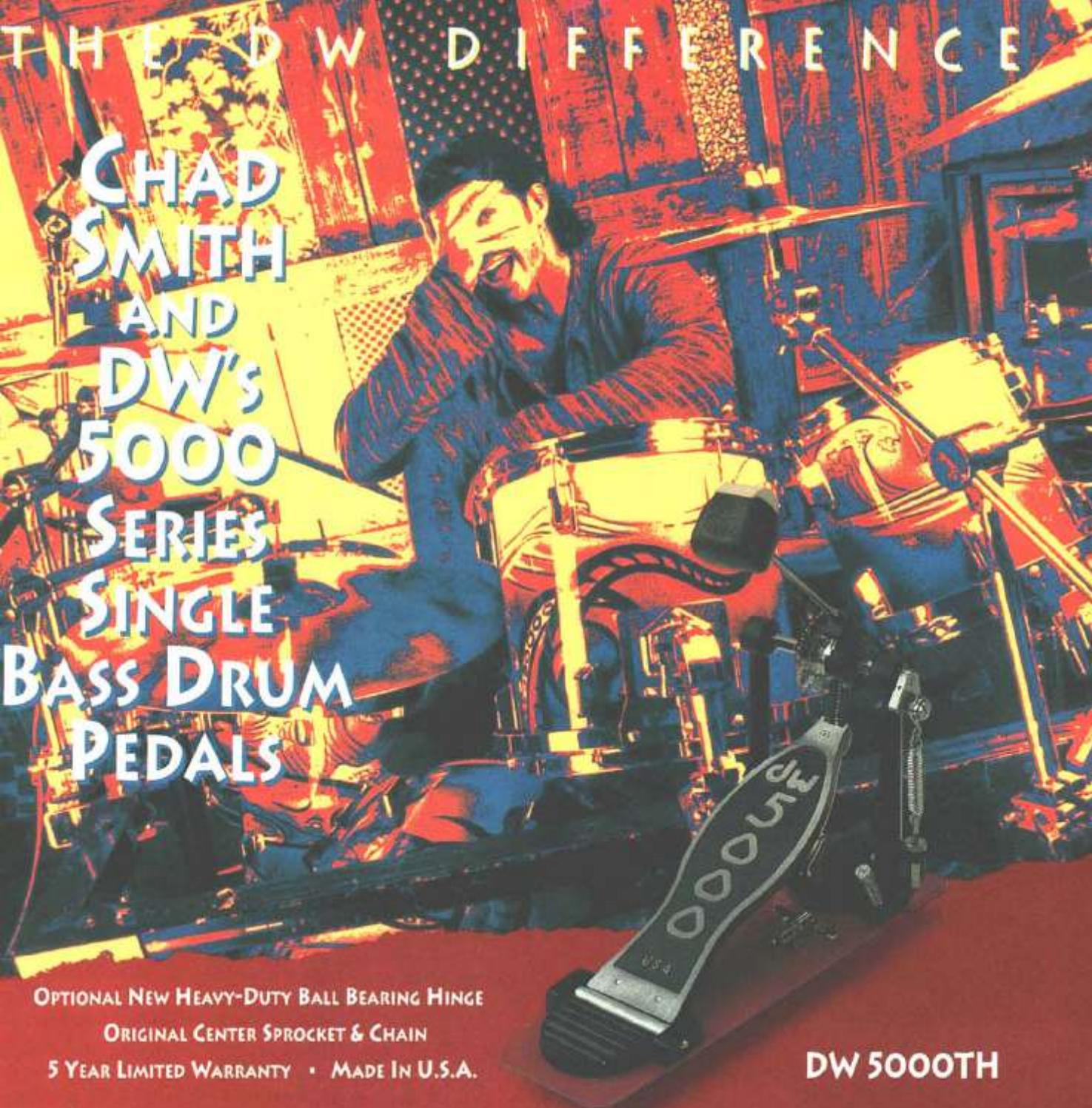
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are Cuban in origin?

**J. Barreto:** They all revolve around clave. There's the cascara pattern and the 6/8 patterns. They're fundamental, so they're like rudiments. The cascara is kind of a control exercise. It ends up being very rudimental, with this combination: RLRL RRLR RLRR LRLR.

**G. Barreto:** Well, I don't know if you would call them rudiments, but there are

some patterns that are played that have become standard—for instance, simultaneously playing cascara with one hand and clave with the other, or timbale bell and bongo bell patterns played simultaneously. These patterns are fundamental to Cuban drumming, especially for the drum-set.

MD: Is there anything you'd like to say to the drummers who read this?

**Garcia:** I would encourage them to reflect on the possibilities of incorporating Cuban rhythms into their training, and invite them to explore a new rhythmic world.

**Mullens:** Well, I am very happy to be interviewed and to be able to give this small message to all drummers and percussionists, especially in the U.S.: Please listen to a lot of Cuban music, listen to and study our drummers and timbaleros. North Americans all have special "tricks" when it comes to playing rock and jazz, and we have ours when it comes to playing Latin music: salsa, Afro-Cuban music—whatever you want to call it. With much love and respect, we are happy to share our music with you, whether it is on record, on video, or in print. In yours truly, Calixto Oviedo Mullens, you have yet another brother.

One of the important messages for drummers who are interested in studying our music is to make sure that they understand the roots of the music. If you want to play rock it certainly helps to listen to John Bonham, Keith Moon, Ginger Baker, and all the great rock drummers. The same thing is true with jazz—Elvin Jones, Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones, Roy Haynes. Develop the roots and a strong foundation and you may be surprised at what can be developed.

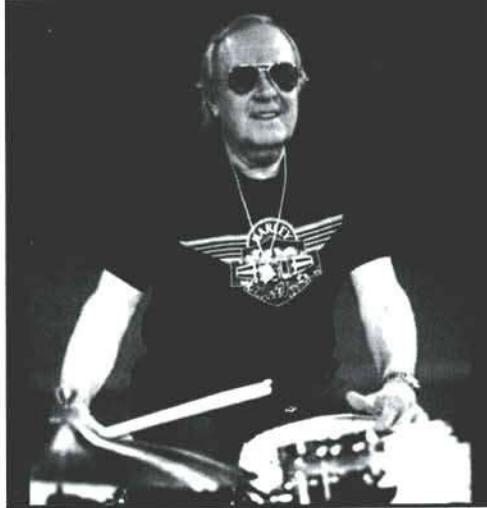
*On our first night in Cuba we were fortunate to be taken to the Marina Hemingway nightclub, an open-air affair that was the essence of "tropical." There we spoke with Jose Manuel Sanchez, the great timbalero with the group Adalberto Alvarez Y Su Son. He was gracious and open, and his band absolutely smoked! In the days that followed Jose introduced us to many drummers and percussionists in Havana. He gave a lot of his time and energy to ensure that our brief stay was successful and enjoyable. We all thank Jose greatly.*

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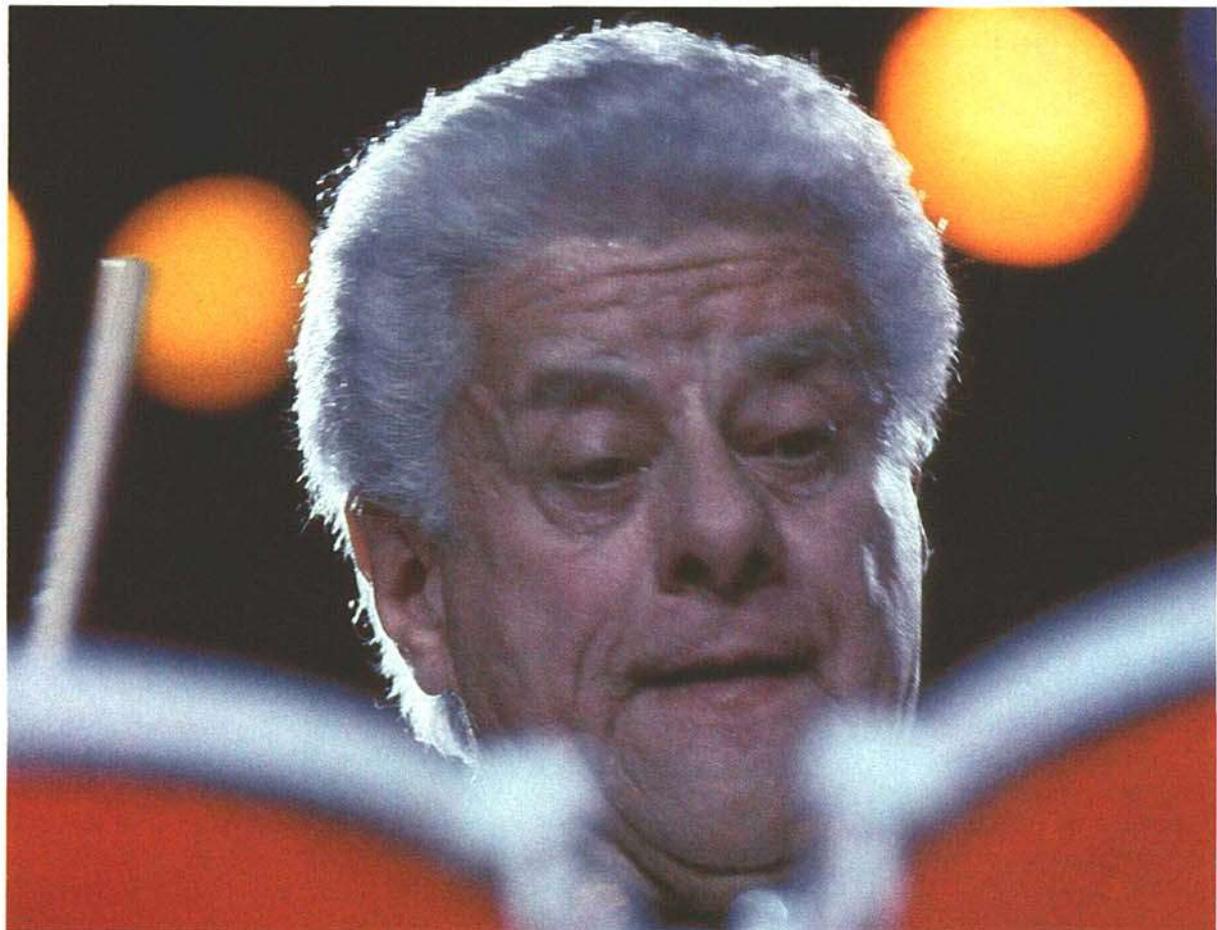
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## RECORDINGS

## CHARLES MINGUS

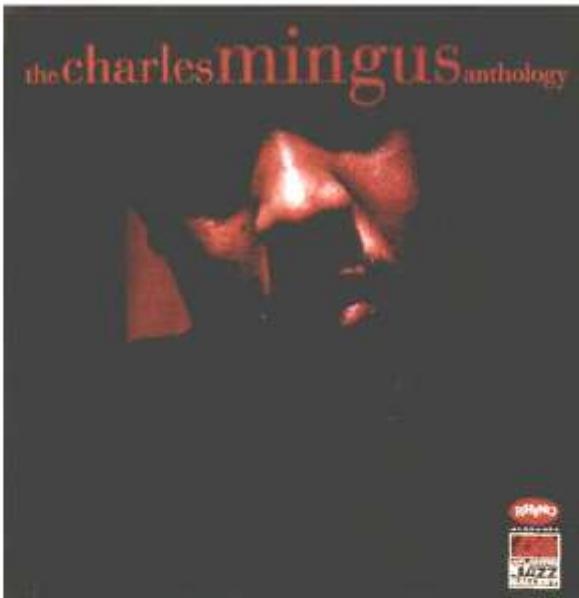
*Thirteen Pictures: The Charles Mingus Anthology*

(Rhino 71402)

**Charles Mingus:** bs, piano, vcl  
**Dannie Richmond,** Max Roach,  
**Willie Jones,** Al Levitt, Walter Perkins: dr  
**other musicians**

Cumbia & Jazz Fusion; Myself When I Am Real; Jump Monk; Haitian Fight Song; Goodbye Pork Pie Hat; Half-Mast Inhibition; Pithecanthropus Erectus; Wig Wise; Better Get It In Your Soul; Meditations On Integration (Parts I and II); Portrait; Hora Decubitus; Ecclasiastics

Mingus mixed the haunting with the humorous, the studied with the street. He resisted, even detested labels—including "jazz." More than just a sideman to the legend, the late Dannie Richmond was an integral part of this legacy. Jazz history has too often under-appreciated this drummer's contribution. His work, represented here on the majority of the cuts, stands with the greats.

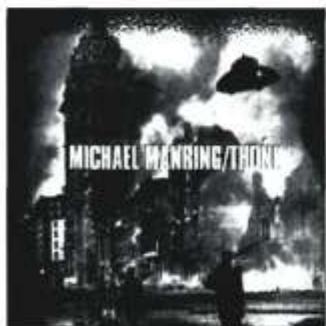


Mingus wisely retained Richmond as his most frequent drummer-in-residence between 1956 and 1979. Spanning intimate improvisations to large orchestral pieces, Mingus's wide compositional scope demanded a drummer who understood conventions but was unafraid of visceral spontaneity. Being a self-taught drummer was perhaps an advantage to Richmond in the instinctual Mingus school.

Rhino's modest two-disc box set (with 52-page booklet) succeeds in its stated aim of providing "an overview of, and introduction to, the music of Charles Mingus." A massive box set wouldn't capture the man's spirit any better.

•Jeff Potter

## MICHAEL MANRING

*Thonk*(High Street/Windham Hill  
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**Steve Smith,**  
**Tim "Herb" Alexander:** dr  
**Michael Manring:** bs  
**Steve Morse,** Alex Skolnick: gtr  
**Philip Aaberg:** piano  
 Big Fungus; Snakes Got Legs; Monkey Businessman; Disturbed; On A Day Of Many Angels; My Three Moons; Cruel And Unusual; Bad Hair Day; Adhan;

You Offered Only Parabolas; The Enormous Room

A "player's" record, *Thonk* is also a beautiful recording and finely crafted artistic statement. Manring lays down the canvas with phenomenal bass work, allowing his San Francisco Bay Area brethren to stretch out and write their own signatures.

Alexander employs much of the attack, precision, and feel that has earned him accolades with the odd rock trio Primus. But on his three cuts, Herb extends his arms a little further, while taking refreshingly dynamic turns and subtle approaches. The pliable Smith, meanwhile, easily moves from chops to a techno-zydeco stomp, his versatility playing especially well into Manring's diversity.

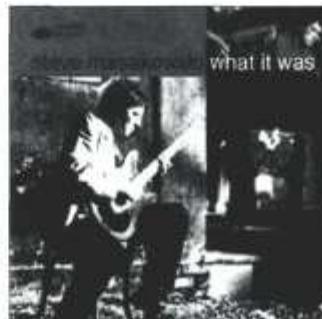
One of *Thonk's* great charms is the complementary styles and performances between its two drummers. Together, Smith and Alexander help make this a thoroughly satisfying musical experience. (High Street Records, Box 9388, Stanford, CA 94309)

•Matt Peiken

## STEVE MASAKOWSKI

*What It Was*

(Blue Note 80591)



**Rick Sebastian,**  
**Johnny Vidacovich:** dr  
**Steve Masakowski:** gtr  
**James Genus:** bs

**Don Alias,** Hector Gallardo: perc  
**Michael Pellara,**  
**David Torkanowsky:** kybd  
**Rick Margitz:** tn sx

Tino's Blues; What It Was; The Big Easy; Hector's Lecture; Budapest; Stepping Stone; Southern Blue; Joao; Starling; Quiet Now; Alexandra; Jesus Last Ballad

New Orleans jazz guitarist Steve Masakowski plays with the purpose and precision of a master. His liquid tone and arcing melodic lines recall the grace of Pat Metheny, the bebop burn of the young George Benson, and the Zen-like logic of the almost forgotten Pat Martino.

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## PRONG

*Cleansing*

(Epic EK 53019)



Ted Parsons: dr

Tommy Victor: gtr, vcl

Paul Raven: bs

John Bechdel: kybds, programming  
Another Wordly Device; Whose Fist Is This Anyway; Snap Your Fingers, Snap Your Neck; Cut-Rate; Broken Peace; One Outnumbered; Out Of This Misery; No Question; Not Of This Earth; Home Rule; Sublime; Test

On their last album, *Prove You Wrong*, Prong proved that metal can have bombast and brains. On *Cleansing*, core members Victor and Parsons opt for stark production (as opposed to the slickness of its predecessor) and add two ex-members of Killing Joke to further hone their tone. The gritty songs, unusual chord progressions, and undeniable hooks are given greater emphasis by Prong's cutting the music to its essentials. Victor plays only one real solo, while Parsons boils his volcanic, steam-rolling tribal warfare down to a powerful thump. He can still burn ("Cut-Rate") or sound like a million guys pounding a single skin ("No Question"), but overall he seems to prefer brute force over flash.

Witty, original, maybe even innovative, Prong give metal a deliciously ugly name.

• Ken Micallef

## COURSE OF EMPIRE

*Initiation*

(Zoo 72445-11054-2)



Chad Lovell, Michael Jerome: dr

Vaughn Stevenson: vcl

Mike Graff: gtr

Paul Semrad: bs

Hiss; White Vision Blowout; Gear; Breed; Apparition; Infested; Invertebrate; Sacrifice; Minions; Initiation; The Chihuahuaphile

This Texas quintet gives new meaning to the metal five-piece. Though the effects and advantages of having two drummers are often hard to place, the end result is an undeniably thick bottom end and rhythms that invariably plow through you like a locomotive.

Approaching the music with a Prong-like militancy, drummers Lovell and Jerome use cutting double bass and tribal tom patterns to pound the beat home. The two supposedly play at the same time, though it's virtually impossible to tell. Outside of the particularly meaty kick drum sound, there's little separating the music from the one-drummer norm.

The drummers put the format to its best use on "Invertebrate," where it appears that they're trading fours on distinct-sounding kits. On "Gear," one holds the beat during the bridge, while the other fills. Now, if they can actually fit both kits onto the stages they'll be playing....

• Ken Micallef

## KEVYN LETTAU

*Another Season*

(JVC 2030-2)



Michael Shapiro: dr, perc

Kevyn Lettau: vcl

Lou Pardini, Bill Cantos: kybd

Keith Jones: bs

Ricardo Silveira, Peter Sprague, Dori Caymmi: gtr

Brad Dutz, Chalo Eduardo: perc  
other musicians

Another Season; Summer Dreams; Morning Kisses; Foundation Of Humanity; I've Got A Crush On You; Ella; You Don't Love Me Like You Used To; Father, Mother; Colors Of Joy; Lead Me Inside Your Love; Retrato Em Branco E Preto; Shower The People

You may remember Michael Shapiro (June '87 *MD*) as the eager young drummer who knocked on Airto's door, declaring his intentions to learn from the master and join his band. And he did. Currently, he has been making good as a producer and drummer for his talented vocalist wife, Kevyn Lettau.

Although the positive, infectious melodies on this disc may land it some "lite jazz" airplay, there's much more heart and sexiness in this music than is normally associated with that low-calorie radio fare. Lettau has a pleasing, sensual voice, a gift for understatement, and a strong rhythmic phrasing honed by her eight years with Sergio Mendes. The tight rhythm sec-

parade their "new traditional guitarist," Masakowski is the real deal, playing invigorating, sometimes breezy jazz free of cliche and high on content. His solos draw you in with their intensity and delight with their melodic invention.

With a rhythm section of Sebastian, Alias, and Gallardo, the grooves here are deep, exciting, and constantly hot—even at slow tempos. Sebastian, who manned the John Scofield drum chair for three years before the arrival of Dennis Chambers, is also from New Orleans and understands the wealth of rhythms and feels of that culture. He can lay down a lush 16th-note pocket ("Budapest"), play a fiery Latin samba ("Hector's Lecture"), or simply add a sultry vibe with a flip of his brushes. He has a sensitive touch that complements Masakowski's style, and a respect for the space between the notes, which lends his grooves a relaxed gait—a subtle, nearly intangible quality. Johnny Vidacovich lends a light touch (except for his plodding bass drum foot) to two tracks, using a delicate sticks-to-brushes approach on "Southern Blue" and swinging sparsely on "The Big Easy."

*What It Was* is a deep well of music; it must be the sound of New Orleans at night.

• Ken Micallef

tion piloted by Shapiro's clean jazz/funk/Brazilian/pop grooves makes the well-crafted arrangements take flight. Shapiro's double-threat drumming/producing talents should have musicians knocking on his door soon.

• Jeff Potter

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# Developing Improvisational Skills: Part 2

by Ed Soph

MUSIC KEY



Last month we covered some basic ways to apply tunes to the drumkit to help expand our musical communication skills. As I mentioned, by using a *musical* format for practicing we discover limitations of execution, dynamic control, accent coordination, melodic construction, and improvisation skills.

Let's pick up from where we left off last month with ways to use actual tunes on the kit. (You may want to refer back to last month's article before attempting the following concepts.) Of course, you should first learn a tune. Either find a recording of one, play the melody on the piano, vibes, or marimba, or have a friend play one for you. Be able to sing, scat, or in some manner vocalize the melody.

- Play the melody on the bass drum while accompanying with a repetitive ride pattern and hi-hat on 2 and 4. Use accents to shape the melodic/rhythmic line on the bass drum.
- Play the melody on the bass drum and accompany with a non-repetitive ride pattern.
- Play the melody on the snare with accents and accompany with repetitive and non-repetitive ride patterns (with the hi-hat on 2 and 4). Fill in 8th-note triplets on the bass drum:

- Play the melody on the bass and fill in the triplets on the snare while playing both repetitive and non-repetitive ride patterns (hi-hat on 2 and 4).

- Play the melody by voicing it between the snare and the bass as you hear it. (Use both repetitive and non-repetitive ride patterns; hi-hat on 2 and 4.) For example:

- Now play the melody on the snare, but play only those notes that you hear as accents. (Accompany with hi-hat and repetitive ride.)
- Use a non-repetitive ride with application 7. When there is more space between the snare notes the ride may be used to fill and link

as well as accent. Remember to play those accents as shoulder crashes. Here's an example:

9. Same as 7 and 8, only now play the accented notes on the bass drum instead of the snare.

10. Play only accented notes on the snare, and fill as you wish with the bass drum. Use both repetitive and non-repetitive ride patterns (with hi-hat on 2 and 4). For example:

11. Same as in 10, except play the accented notes on the bass and fills of your own creation on the snare.

Up to this point the hi-hat has played a repetitive, non-interactive role. But now you can go back and apply all of the applications to the hi-hat—carrying the melodic rhythm, filling around the melody, playing only accented notes...there are at least another twenty applications.

In addition, other styles may be practiced through the use of other ostinatos. Latin-type interpretations are possible by using the following bass rhythms. (The melody with these examples would be phrased in straight rather than swung 8ths.)

Throughout all of the exercises, the melody should literally be kept in mind. Obviously a person won't have any idea of how to vocalize unless he or she has listened to the great instrumentalists who have defined the articulations and phrasings of improvised music. Drummers should listen to drummers *last*. First listen to the horns. The drummer should play in reaction to what the horn player plays. That reaction may, in turn, inspire the soloist.

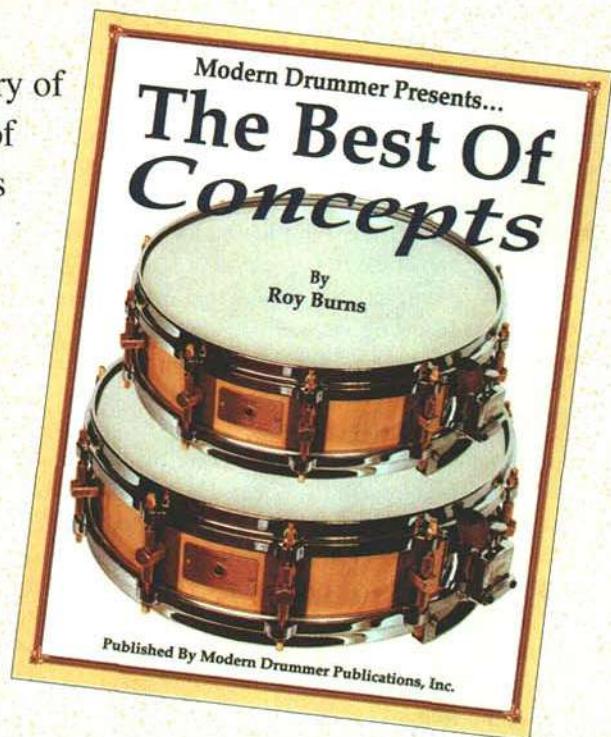
It is not enough to simply read the language. We must be able to speak it, to have the sounds in our minds. Learn to speak—or "sing"—by listening to instrumentalists like Louis Armstrong, Lester Young, Clark Terry, and Coleman Hawkins, for starters. And listen to the great jazz vocalists like Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, and Betty Carter. If you can't sing it, you probably can't play it.

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# Who Knew But You?

by Fred Lite

When I was sixteen I went on the road working as a drummer. I had been leading the usual mundane existence of an American teenager; my major responsibility up to that point in time had been getting my homework done. But somehow I landed the percussion chair with a national production of the Broadway show *The Me Nobody Knows*.

At the time I was agonizingly shy and innocent, and extremely nervous about screwing up such an important job. However, an experience I would have while playing the show would convince me that while beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, errors are only errors in the eye of the one who errs.

All of the musicians except for me were road veterans. An older guitarist—he was at least thirty—helped teach me how to survive on the road. He was amazingly well-adapted to the lifestyle. He knew the legal drinking age in every state we were in. He knew the locations of the bars closest to each theater. He possessed the uncanny ability to be able to find an open Howard Johnson's after the gig was over in any city in America—and he knew what to order!

A few weeks into our trip our orchestra was told a story by a member of the orchestra from a road production of *West Side Story*. They were playing the same circuit as we were. It seems one of their percussionists had nodded off during a performance. When he awoke, he realized that he had missed a loud bash on the gong, so he instantly smashed it. Unfortunately, he did so during the romantic balcony scene. Maria almost fell off the balcony. Amazingly, however, the audience took it in stride. The percussionist, unfortunately, did not; he paused a moment and then ran straight through the audience and out the door. Yet in the next day's review, the critic made no mention of the incident. I should have understood at that moment that there is no reason to be nervous about your playing; the audiences just don't know, and it just doesn't matter.

Still, from the beginning of our trip, hints were dropped about the importance of an upcoming performance in a particular Midwest town, and nerves began to sensitize. As the date for the special performance approached, the pressure began filtering down from the top. The stage crew and the musicians were screamed at with increasing regularity. The actors began screaming at the musicians and at each other. Actresses yelled and banged things while fighting for position at the make-up tables. One actress was aggressively after me to talk with her alone in my room. I didn't know what someone her age could possibly want to talk to me about, but she made me nervous and I avoided her. She seemed really old. I think she was twenty-eight.

On the day of the important gig, we were met at the airport by a small fleet of limos. As soon as I entered my room I received a phone call. It was the stage manager: The band was to meet with him in his room for important instructions. Almost at the moment I hung up the phone, our bass player was at my door speculating that we had been fired. I almost threw up in the elevator. How would I get home with my drums? Would they have to pay me for the previous two weeks? How does one go about getting a cab? How do you purchase a plane ticket? Was I *old enough* to buy a plane ticket? Would I have to pay for the room I had spent three minutes in?

When we entered the stage manager's room we were introduced to the head of the local chamber of commerce, who explained to us the importance of the upcoming performance. We were to play the opening of the most prestigious sports/cultural arts/shopping complex in the Midwest. It was going to be the Mecca of the arts: a tasteful blending of opera, theater, ancient artifacts, hockey, and Arby's. He had us scheduled to appear on live TV that evening to promote the show.

When we arrived at the set of the TV show they immediately pointed out the show's drummer. He was about six feet, ten inches tall. I'm under six feet tall: about *eight inches* under. They told me I'd have thirty seconds during a commercial to adjust his drums so I'd be comfortable playing on them. I was able to lower one cymbal, but the rest of the drums remained significantly over my head. Not only was it impossible for me to play well, it was also impossible for the camera to see me—or for me to see anyone else. During the show, the only proof that an actual person was behind the drums was the top of my beret popping into view once or twice when I leaned to the right. When the conductor cut the first tune short, I couldn't see over the drums to stop with him, so I wound up playing a short extemporaneous drum solo—on a ballad. During the next song I was so nervous that I played tentatively and at less than half normal volume—but I did not cut off late. I cut off early. On the ride to the theater after the TV show no one spoke to me or sat next to me. Even the twenty-eight-year-old actress left me alone.

Since that evening's performance of *The Me Nobody Knows* was to be the premier performance in the theater, both the mayor of the city and the governor of the state were scheduled to make speeches. Then we (or specifically, I) would play the first note—in front of more than ten thousand people.

The house theater crew included an incredible teenage girl. She had blond hair and tattoos, and she could crack open beer bottles without an opener. This was easily the most sensuous woman I had ever been in a room with. There was no way for me to find the nerve to speak to her, but I did manage to play really fast rolls every time she walked by.

At the new theater the band was situated stage left, with micro-

phones carrying the music out into the audience. For the premier, we had to assume our positions behind our instruments and stay there during all the speeches. The mayor came first, followed by the governor, who rambled on for at least twenty minutes. Throughout his speech the tattooed blonde was standing near me. When she actually spoke to me, saying, "You're from the Big Apple, huh?" I had to back up slightly from the drums; the last un-stimulated nerve in my body had been stimulated.

Finally, the speeches ended. The stage manager—a diminutive Hawaiian fellow named Kimo—announced that there were five minutes to curtain. The blonde bumped against me as she went to her position. I was shaking noticeably.

Now, the opening of the show was a bit radical. It opened not with the traditional double-forte, all-musicians-blasting fanfare, but with a triple-pianissimo tap on the lightest bell on a belltree. For those who may not know, a belltree is a vertical row of bells. The bottom bell is small, high-pitched, and delicate in timbre and volume. The top bell is twice as large—having perhaps a 4" diameter—and is considerably louder. There are approximately twenty bells in all—suspended, evenly spaced, on a vertical threaded wire and fastened at the top by a wingnut. That seemingly mundane little wingnut has to be fastened at the top of the bells, or they will all fall off the rack.

At this point the only light in the area was provided by the blue lamps illuminating the pages of our music. I could barely see the belltree. In the blue glow of his music stand, I could see the conductor raising his right hand. I carefully picked up the bells and held the stick an inch away from them—ready to play the first note before the mayor, the governor, and ten thousand others in this multi-million-dollar cultural Mecca of the Midwest.

The conductor lowered his arm, and I prepared to strike the bells. But as I did, the wingnut—apparently not fastened by the crew in the darkened room—fell off. The bells began bouncing off my drums in crescendoing waves. Each new bell provided an increasingly loud, arrhythmic series of pops on my loudest drum. As each bell in turn bounced from dancing loudly on the drum to crashing on the floor, it produced the sound you hear garbage cans make when being knocked over by the wind. The guitarist, in an attempt to grab the bells and abort the cacophony, reached towards me—and in doing so pulled his plug out, creating deafening feedback. The bass player, apparently having forgotten there were live mic's surrounding us, yelled an expletive at the top of his lungs as bells rolled by him. When the conductor reached over to stop the falling bells, he knocked over one of my cymbals, which impacted with the volume of a detonated warhead. It would have been interesting to see the look on the face of the actor who was kneeling on stage, ready to

start the show as he did every night: sobbing in a low voice.

In spite of the extraordinary opening, the show continued unabated. The guitarist managed to sneak off stage and secure a fifth of Scotch from his room. Certain that we were going home—all the way home to New York—the band drank in earnest, dreading the appearance of the stage manager during intermission. I longed to be somewhere safe—like Viet Nam.

The lights went on, indicating that the intermission was beginning. For the first time on the tour, no one from the band left their instruments during the break—although we did have the good sense to hide the bottle in the guitar case. Unfortunately, we couldn't fit ourselves into the case. Kimo lumbered slowly towards the orchestra, hands clasped behind his back in a pose reminiscent of Groucho Marx—or Adolph Hitler. His piercing, beady eyes met the bloodshot ones of the conductor—a man in a surprisingly sober mood for someone who was totally inebriated.

"Interesting opening," Kimo commented. Then he turned and walked away. We had turned a simple, single "ping" on a small bell into a full minute of convulsive disharmony sufficiently obnoxious to offend John Cage—and we weren't fired! In fact, no one knew! They had to have heard it. Helen Keller would have heard it! Could it have been that the sophisticated audience actually missed picking up this bomb I'd dropped? Later, the governor complimented the conductor on how well the band simulated the freneticism of New York street noises in the

show's opening. Someone in the show suggested we leave the new opening in.

Over the years many people had told me that if you are going to make a mistake, do it with enthusiasm. I had hit the biggest clam imaginable—and almost no one knew. Those who did know also knew enough to know that they shouldn't say they knew, because, after all...who knew?

All the guilt for every wrong note I had ever—and would ever—stumble through was exorcised from me by this incredible episode. There no longer existed any need to be nervous about performing. After all, even if I tried to, I could never again equal this faux-pas. I became proud of my mistakes! If they sounded good, I could claim them to be improvised improvements. If not...well...at least I didn't run out through the audience afterwards.

We played several more important events during the run of that show, and I never again became nervous about playing. (But the twenty-eight-year-old actress still scared me to death.)



# Summer Drumset Workshops

by Rick Mattingly

"What would you like to play?" instructor Steve Houghton asks the student who is about to play drums with a bassist and guitarist in front of about fifty other students attending a week-long drumset workshop.

"Can we do a funk-shuffle?" the student asks.

"Sure," Houghton replies, turning to the class. "For those who have never played this style," he says, "a funk beat is based on straight 16th notes and a shuffle is based on triplets that swing. So a funk-shuffle is jazz with a backbeat, or funk that swings."

Turning again to the student, Houghton asks to hear the beat. The drummer sets up a fairly busy groove, with a lot of interaction between the bass drum and snare and frequent shifting between the hi-hat and ride cymbal. After a couple of bars, the bass player joins in with a vamp pattern, over which the guitarist plays the tune "Oleo." When they finish, the students applaud heartily.

"How did you determine when to change from the hi-hat to the cymbal?" instructor Bob Breithaupt asks.

"I was just changing at random," the student admits.

"Even in a vamp tune like this, try to put more structure into your playing by changing the voices at the end of 8-bar or 16-bar phrases," Breithaupt suggests.

"Also, be careful with your backbeats," instructor Guy Remonko adds. "When you play rimshots, try to get a little more drum into the sound, or else it sounds like Dixieland."

Ed Soph then advises the student to play a little more simply when working with a group of players for the first time. "You need to hear how they're feeling the time, and they need to do the same thing with you," he says. "If you keep it pretty basic at first, it gives everyone room to adjust to each other."

Far from being embarrassed by the instructors' comments, the student seems very appreciative of the opportunity to pick up tips from the workshop's five teachers: Houghton, Breithaupt, Remonko, Soph, and Gary Chaffee. Likewise, the other students are not sitting in judgment of their colleague's performance, but rather they identify with it—seeing how they can apply his ideas to their own playing and what they can learn from the instructors' suggestions. Ultimately, all of the students have a chance to try a tune with the rhythm section—preferably in a style they aren't especially adept at.

"If a student is primarily a rocker, we insist that he try a jazz tune," explains Soph. "And if he's a hot bebop player with lousy backbeat chops, we have him play something more pop-oriented. It's great to see the expression on their faces when they get through a tune the first time."

Giving students an opportunity for supervised performance in a



**Instructor Bob Breithaupt with students at a Summer Drumset Workshop**

realistic setting with other musicians is one of the main goals of the Summer Drumset Workshop camps that have been held each summer since 1980. The workshops began when Bob Breithaupt (who teaches at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio) met Guy Remonko (an instructor at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio). "We talked about the fact that there seemed to be a lot of basic knowledge about drumset that people weren't getting just through private lessons," Breithaupt says. "We decided to hold a week-long summer workshop to address some of those issues."

Breithaupt immediately invited Ed Soph (with whom he had once studied) to come in as a guest lecturer for a couple of days. "Ed agreed," Breithaupt says, "and afterwards said that he would like to become part of the workshop on a regular basis. So, since 1981, Ed, Guy, and I have been on the faculty. We added Steve Houghton in '87, and last year we added Gary Chaffee." The camp has also had guest artists come in on occasion, including Alan Dawson and Tommy Aldridge.

For the first several years the workshop was held at Ohio University. Later it was moved to Columbus because of that city's greater accessibility to a major airport. Since 1990 a second camp has been held at the University of North Texas. Camps have also been held in Salt Lake City and Phoenix. Last year the workshops became affiliated with Yamaha's Sounds of Summer program.

Soph says that the idea behind the workshops is to teach drums from a musical standpoint, not just from a drumming perspective. "We structure it so that the students don't just learn drum licks, but also have the experience of playing with other people. We talk about principles of musicianship, form and analysis, different styles, and the history of the instrument."

While all of the teachers participate in the rhythm-section ses-

sions, each has his own particular area of concentration. Breithaupt is in charge of the history lectures, which include a lot of listening to drumset players from Dixieland on up.

"A lot of the students don't have a good perspective on how the different styles have developed and how closely related they are," Breithaupt says. "If you understand the history, you begin to understand why drummers played a certain way for a particular style. You also learn how connected the different styles are. For example, a simple backbeat is the basis of both Dixieland and heavy metal drumming. So those drummers have more in common than they would ever imagine."

"We also deal with the development of the rhythm section, which is unique to American music," Breithaupt adds. "Having bass, chordal, and drumming instruments is something all the styles have in common—whether it's rock, jazz, or whatever."

In Steve Houghton's class, students learn the fundamentals of the different styles. "Most drummers who come into the camp are rock players who haven't had any jazz or Latin experience," Houghton says. "My goal is to expose them to the other styles and show them the basic elements of different types of beats. Then they'll get experience using them in our rhythm-section sessions. For most students, it's the first time they've played a bossa nova or a jazz blues, so it can be an earth-shaking experience. But it's also a lot of fun."

When rock drummers ask why they need to learn other styles, Houghton has an answer. "There are facets of jazz and Latin independence that can really help their rock playing," he says. "Looking at it another way, if you just play rock, there are certain elements of independence that you will never unearth, like subtleties with the left hand, bass drum nuances, or different types of four-way coordination. The other styles of music help bring these things out. Drummers like Gregg Bissonette, Steve Smith, and Peter Erskine really cross over very well: Their jazz playing has helped their rock, and vice versa. Learning other styles won't hurt anyone's rock playing, but it will give them a wider view and increase their independence and coordination."

Houghton also deals with chart reading. "I try to dispel the notion that reading is boring or that it's just for big band," he says. "There are a lot of misunderstandings connected with chart reading. So the purpose of that class is to expose the player to all facets of drum chart reading, whether it be a lead sheet, a bass part, a score, or a strict drum part. I try to run as much music as possible past the students and give them an overall concept for drumset chart reading and interpretation."

Guy Remonko's sessions deal with basic musicianship, such as understanding song forms. "The first observation we made after doing one or two workshops," Remonko says, "is that you can't assume that students understand basic performance practices. A lot of our students have only played in rock groups that have singers, so they follow the structure of a song by listening to the lyrics. But when they play an instrumental, they don't have any idea where they are in the song. So we help them learn to think in terms of phrases and sections and form, and we study the most frequently used song forms in popular music, such as A-A-B-A and twelve-bar blues. We also talk about standard ways for a song to end so they can handle playing situations where there is no rehearsal."

Listening to recordings is also a big part of Remonko's class. "We analyze how the drums are fitting into the big picture of the performance," he explains, "and see how the drums and bass are working together. It's amazing what a difference it makes with the students in a short period of time. My class is the one where they can actually apply what they learned that morning to something they do in the afternoon, without having to woodshed for three hours in a practice room."

Ed Soph deals with the nuts and bolts of basic technique and coordination. "We stress basics because they are so often overlooked," says Soph. "A lot of people want to jump right in and play like Steve Gadd or Dave Weckl without really understanding the mechanics of playing the instrument. They don't realize that the reason Mr. Gadd and Mr. Weckl are so good is because they have mastered the fundamental aspects."

According to Soph, dealing with basics also helps make the classes accessible to all students. "Students with any level of experience can benefit," he says. "People with less experience will be seeing things for the first time, and people with more experience will see old things in a new way. We find that the more we talk about the basics, the more we find that they are the most complex things to deal with."

"Talking about basics also helps prevent people from being intimidated," Soph continues. "So many people's learning experiences have been squashed because of that secondary-school attitude of, No, that's the *wrong* answer. People come in scared of making a mistake. But our approach is that if it's done in time, it's not a mistake—it's an 'improvisation.' The positive atmosphere that develops from that is amazing. People aren't afraid to practice anymore. They know that if they get an original idea, that's the best possible thing. They learn not to question their own instincts."

Soph admits that there are always a couple of students who are

**"Students come  
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instincts."**

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timid about participating. "We've learned to let these people feel their way into it," he says. "We don't put pressure on them to play until they get their courage up. To see them come around in the course of a week and start to *enjoy* what they're doing—instead of being *afraid* of it—is one of the most gratifying aspects of the workshop."

The newest class is taught by Gary Chaffee. "I discuss how various techniques—such as different stickings, different numerical groupings, and linear playing—can be used in performance on the drumset," Chaffee says. "I also cover some of the modern styles and some hand/foot coordination techniques."

Besides the classes, students receive two group lessons per camp with two different instructors—with an average group consisting of four students. Explains Soph, "Students are grouped according to a questionnaire that we have them fill out—which concerns their playing and educational backgrounds—and by what we observe during the different classes. But there is no audition to get into the camp."

There is also time set aside each day for students to practice. Everyone is asked to bring either a snare drum or a practice pad on a stand, but all drumsets and cymbals are provided by Yamaha and Zildjian.

Students are also advised to bring either a tape recorder or a video recorder so they can "take the camp home" with them. "I've taught at a lot of colleges and seen a lot of curriculums," Chaffee says, "and I can honestly say that this is the best course I've ever seen in terms of what it does in the amount of time it has. In fact, we've had discussions about whether we are overwhelming the students by giving them so much information. But we give lots of handouts, which they can keep for reference, and if they tape the sessions they can continually go back to the original lesson."

The camp is open to players of all ages and experience levels, and there is room for up to fifty students per camp. Soph says that the camp has had drummers ranging in age from fourteen to sixty-five, with the majority falling between fifteen and eighteen years of age. Years of playing experience range from one to thirty, with the average being three to five years.

Simon Goetz, a fourteen-year-old from Oklahoma who rates himself as a beginner, says that he had no problem with the level of instruction. "They made it accessible for any age group or skill," says Simon, "and I really got a lot out of it. The history classes were interesting, and I learned a lot of technical aspects of playing. The workshop encouraged me to practice a lot because I realized that there were goals I could reach. The camp really got me into jazz more than I thought it would, and it broadened my view of playing overall. I'm hoping I can go back next year."

For Sean Mireau, a twenty-three-year-old professional drummer from Arizona, Houghton's reading class and Chaffee's system of rhythmic groupings were especially helpful. "I was already pretty familiar with most of the different styles," he says, "but it was nice to be able to speak with people like Ed Soph who are very successful in the industry. I also picked up some ways to add variety to my playing, and I learned a lot in the history class."

Even the teachers are discovering new things. "I always learn

something from the other faculty members," says Breithaupt. "And the more-advanced students are always very helpful in seeing the less-advanced develop, because everyone recognizes that they have a lot to learn. We make a point of telling the students that we don't know it all, and that's why we have a variety of faculty members. That's one of the things that makes these workshops so special, and there is a great camaraderie between the faculty and students."

This summer's workshops will be held at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, June 12 - 16, and at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, July 17 - 22. For information on the Columbus workshop contact Bob Breithaupt, Capital University, Conservatory of Music, Columbus, OH 43209, (614) 236-6411 or (614) 236-6234. For information on the Denton workshop contact Ed Soph, College of Music, University of North Texas, Box 13887, Denton, TX 76203, (817) 565-2791 or (817) 383-4693. Cost is \$385 for the Columbus camp and \$395 for the Denton camp, which includes tuition, room and board, and all materials.



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# Abe Laboriel, Jr.

## Sometimes It Isn't Just Who You Know...

by Robyn Flans

Abe Laboriel, Jr. knows he's lucky. He's aware that being the son of ace session bassist Abe Laboriel, Sr. has opened doors for him. But he is also smart enough to realize that his real advantage lies in the fact that his wise father instilled in him a thirst for knowledge and equipped him with the tools he would need when those doors opened. So when gigs with Joe Sample, Diane Reeves, or Steve Vai came along, young Abe was ready.

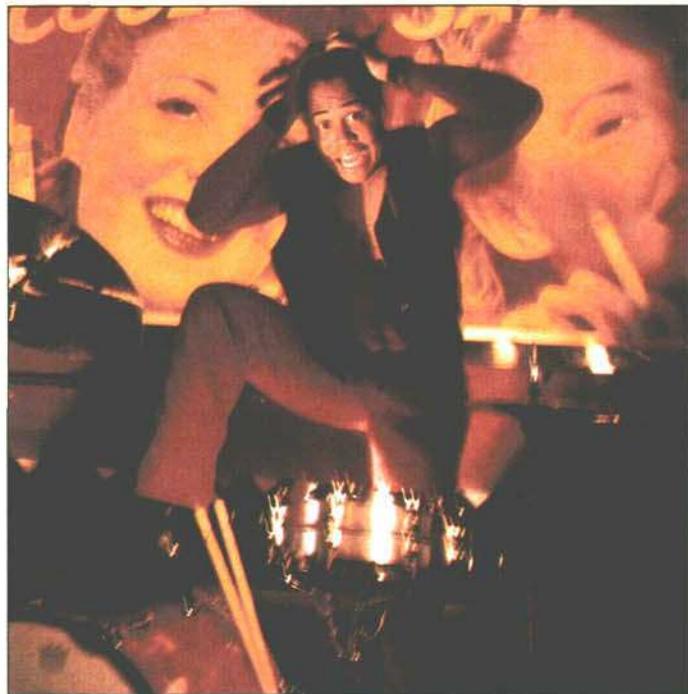
The senior Laboriel was also helpful in obtaining some notable instructors for his son. Abe, Jr. received his first set at age four, and his dad started his lessons off by teaching him how to play a groove while he accompanied him on bass. When the family moved to the Los Angeles area, Laboriel's connections provided the budding drummer with some of the best education available.

"I started taking lessons from Alex Acuna from the age of ten," says Laboriel. "He took me under his wing and taught me for free because I was like a surrogate son. He taught me how to think about music rather than how to play things like rudiments or how to read. He'd show me the basic idea behind the groove and tell me to take it home, mess with it, and come up with different variations of my own. He taught me about the correct mindset—not to necessarily be involved in your *own* place, but instead to be involved as a whole with other people. He stressed how to accommodate what you're doing to what other people are feeding you, rather than just thinking, this is the beat I learned so this is the beat I have to play."

In his junior year, Abe attended the Hamilton High School Academy of Music in West L.A., which is a regular high school with a rigorous humanities program. At the same time, he took classes in jazz, harmony, and ear training at Dick Grove's College of Music, where he also studied with Peter Donald.

Laboriel's first kit was a gift from Jamie Haddad. "He converted a floor tom into a bass drum," Abe recalls. "My second kit came from Alex after a couple of years of lessons with him. He exchanged that set for another when I was ready to go to the next level. When I went to Berklee, Jeff Porcaro gave me a kit. He was like another father to me—he believed in me."

Despite the intense focus on study, Laboriel insists he never felt railroaded into lessons. "At the age of ten," he says, "I expressed that this was what I wanted to do with my life. My parents said, 'If you want to do this, do it right.' It was frustrating every once in a while when I couldn't go out because I had to go to class. But in the long run, it taught me responsibility and I learned a lot from it."



Laboriel does admit, however, that Berklee's initial appeal was an escape from L.A.'s spotlight. "There was this rumor that I was going to be the 'next cat,' as it were," he says, his eyes rolling. "I didn't want to be forced into anything prematurely, and I also didn't want to be heard before I felt I was ready. I didn't want it to be, 'This guy is really good...for eighteen.' So I decided to go away to Berklee."

It didn't hurt that the music school offered him a full scholarship after hearing him play in a jazz trio at the *Downbeat* Music Fest Competition in 1989. But Laboriel admits that it took a while to adopt the proper perspective on the college so that he could avail himself of its resources. "I wanted to go there to get my butt kicked and to learn something from a lot of people," he says. "But I went in with the wrong attitude because I was thinking, 'What's with this place? Nobody here is good.' Finally, instead of looking at the technical things, I looked at the players and what kind of heart they would pour into their music. I started to really fall in love with Boston."

"I also started drumming in a lot of different rock bands," Abe continues, "and I did some jazz gigs. I played music for the heart and soul of it. At the same time, in case I needed it, I studied music synthesis, which I was always interested in. I learned a lot about sampling—which I only want to use for my personal writ-

ing; I'm not really into electronic drum sounds. I learned a lot about all sides of music from being there. People from all over the world go to Berklee to study music, so I would have a jam session with a Japanese horn player and a German bass player."

During school breaks, Laboriel had the opportunity to play a benefit with Al Jarreau (with his dad on bass), performing the singer's pop tunes with a jazz slant. He also did a two-week tour with Joe Sample over a summer. And then came his first studio session—playing on a record by Justo Almario called *Heritage*. There were no first-time jitters on this date, though. "It wasn't scary at all," Abe insists. "I had been playing forever, so I wasn't nervous. Plus I had watched so many sessions with Vinnie Colaiuta, Jeff Porcaro, John Robinson, and so many others."

The second album Abe played on was his father's solo offering, *Dear Friends*. The bassist was in the midst of pre-production for the album, with Jeff Porcaro on drums, when Porcaro passed away. "I remember the night my dad called to tell me that Jeff had died," Abe recalls. "I lost it; he was so important to me. It was a frantic time, but one of the first things my father said was that he wanted me to play on the record. He also had Jim Keltner, Steve Gadd, Alex—all of us trying to fill in for what none of us could really do. It was very emotional—first of all because it was my dad, but also because of the circumstances."

Life got even more interesting when Laboriel completed his four years at Berklee in May of 1993. The first project he worked on upon his return to L.A. was a record for Diane Reeves that was released this past February. "It was a lot of fun, and I really got to create," smiles Laboriel. "She wanted to have pop sounds, but not make them *sound* pop, so I had to come up with different grooves without using a snare backbeat. I played a lot of jazzy ride cymbal, and I hit my backbeats on the floor tom—or not at all—and allowed Luis Conte to supply the backbeat on his percussion instruments. Still, we had to make it groove and keep the pulse going. I'm really proud of the result."

Laboriel next began working with Tribal Tech. "I played with them for a week or two," he says. "It was very hard and very loud. We were playing small clubs and I wasn't miked at all, so I was coming home with blood blisters. It was also very limiting: Whenever I'd deviate and try to come up with a new part during an improvisational section, they would look back at me like, 'What are you doing? The bass drum should be *here*.'

"I was still doing that when I got called for an audition for En

Vogue," Laboriel recalls. "They had been auditioning drummers for two weeks, and after seeing a hundred other drummers, they hired me. They called me at midnight the day before the first rehearsal and said to show up with my drums and that they didn't have any rehearsal tape to give me. I got there and there were no charts or anything. The girls weren't there; it was just the band rehearsing. They said, 'We'll just yell out kicks to you,' as if that was really going to work—which, of course, it didn't. Then they gave me a rehearsal tape to write out at home that night and had me play with them the next day. I got a call the next morning at 10:00, saying, 'We taped yesterday's rehearsal and played it for the girls, and they didn't think you were very good.' They decided to hire the original guy back after the three weeks of auditioning."

Although obviously the victim of an unfair situation, Laboriel didn't take it as a personal failing. "I knew there was nothing I could have done," he says, "and I didn't feel that it was a shortcoming on my part. Under different circumstances, something like that could have been devastating. But I figured that it was meant to be and that there must be something else that was going to happen."

Indeed there was. One night, while Abe, Jr. was finishing out his commitment with Tribal Tech, a stranger approached the bandstand. After complimenting Laboriel on his playing, he suggested that the drummer look into some auditions that were being held for Steve Vai the following day.

The next day, Laboriel went to the rehearsal studio. "A roadie was walking by," he recalls, "and I said, 'I don't have an appointment, but I'd like to audition if there's a chance.' Finally there was an opening. The bass player wasn't there; they were using some guy from the rehearsal studio. Steve was sitting on a stool, and he just said, 'Nice to meet you,' in a very tired, unimpressed voice. 'Just play something.' So I started playing a groove. Suddenly he stood up and went over to his pedals and got into it. We lost ourselves for ten minutes, and he hired me."

"We got into rehearsals," Laboriel continues, "and it was really a challenge. Terry Bozzio had played on the album, so I was playing all these Bozzio licks. I had never played double bass before, and within the three weeks of rehearsal, I learned how to play Bozzio double bass. I had to get used to the evenness of making it a steady pulse, because the hi-hat obviously reacts differently than another bass drum pedal. Plus, whenever Terry would use the bass drums, he would hit cymbals at the same time. So I had the two

**"There was this rumor that I was going to be the 'next cat.' But I didn't want to be heard before I was ready. I didn't want it to be, This guy is really good...for eighteen."**



cymbals on either side."

Another new challenge posed by the Steve Vai gig involved singing. "I had never sung and played before," says Abe. "It was quite a learning experience. I had to change my physical stance and sit more upright. I first tried using a regular mic', but that was crazy, especially for this type of music, because I had to be all over the

kit doing all this stuff. So I wound up using a headset mic'. I had to rethink my playing and trust my drumming enough to concentrate on my singing. We rehearsed for three weeks straight, so the parts became automatic and I didn't have to think, Okay, now I have to play this difficult lick in 7 and sing these words.... I suck at memorizing words anyway, so I

did some little tricks. I'd write two words to represent a full sentence, and I'd do that for each little grouping I had to sing. Then I'd tape that in front of the tom-tom. So I was reading, singing, and playing the drums. But it came together."

Unfortunately, however, the experience soured. "We got on the road," says Laboriel, "and it was really tense because the money wasn't good. Part of the reason was that Vai was used to going out with Whitesnake and making a lot of money on a tour. In a club setting, people go on the road knowing they'll lose money but hoping to make it back on record sales. He wasn't used to that concept, so after three days he said, 'I can't afford to put you into hotels anymore.' So twelve guys—the band and crew—wound up sleeping on the bus. I complained like crazy and tried to get him to realize that this was not possible. When he wouldn't budge, I quit—about three weeks into the tour. I told him to start looking for a new drummer and said, 'I'm not going to leave right now and screw you, but don't screw me by keeping me on if you have somebody you can get.' He found Toss Panes and flew him into New York. I taught him the show in one day and left."

At present, Laboriel is uncertain as to his goals, although the recording sessions he's done lately have been very enjoyable. "They've really required creativity," he says. "I did a song for a reggae group called Big Mountain. It's in Wynona Ryder's *Reality Bites* movie. They came in with the basic song, but not much else. They did know that they wanted a machine sound, but they wanted it to feel good. I

## Larry Bright and MAPEX

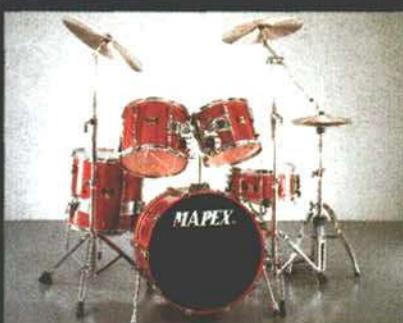
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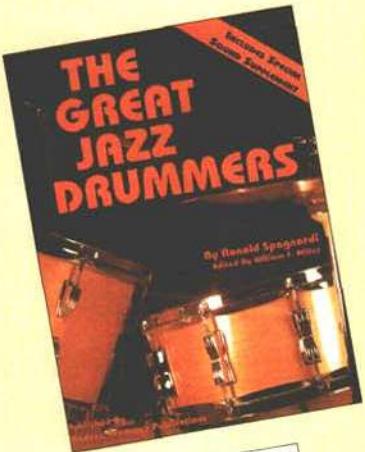
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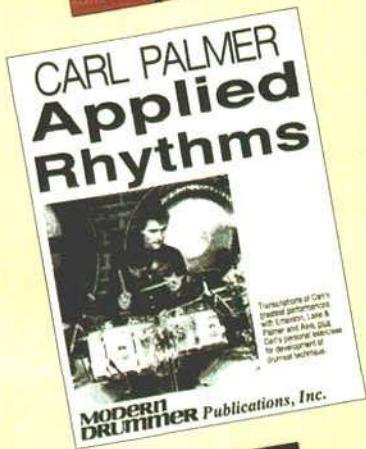
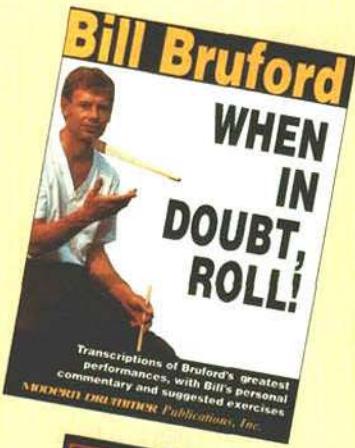
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by Bill Bruford

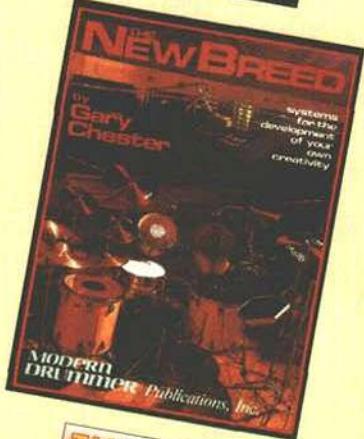
Transcriptions of 18 of Bruford's greatest recorded performances, his personal commentary about each piece, and Bill's exercises to develop facility, flexibility, and creativity at the drumset.



## Applied Rhythms

by Carl Palmer

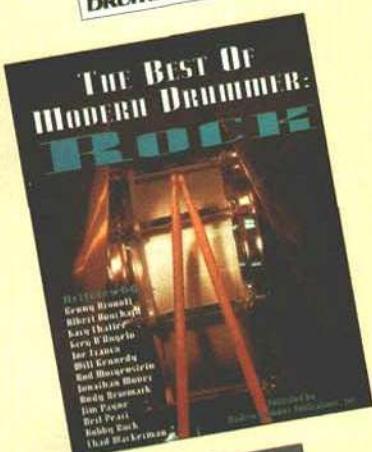
This book contains transcriptions of ten of Carl Palmer's most famous recordings, and also includes Carl's personal exercises for drumset technique.



## The New Breed

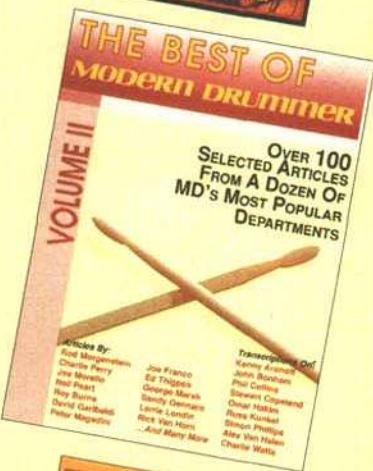
by Gary Chester

This is not just another drum book, but rather a system that will help you develop the skills needed to master today's studio requirements.

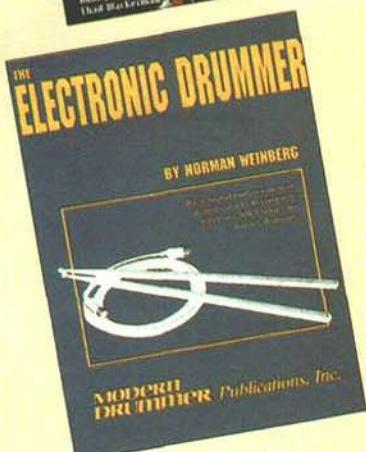


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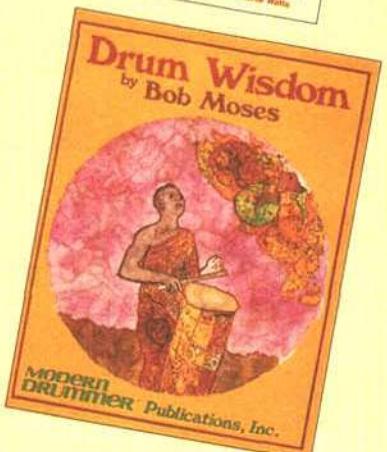
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### Pearl Pushes "Hooked On Drums"

This spring, Pearl is launching a multifaceted recruitment program called Hooked On Drums. Created by the Pearl Educational Development Board, Hooked On Drums will incorporate retailers, clinicians, school systems, and students in a grass-roots effort to encourage the use of percussion as a primary and supplementary hobby. Pearl will begin the campaign by utilizing ten Regional Influence Centers located in key markets across the country, from which endorsers will conduct outreach clinics in local schools.

### Vintage Drum Center Promotes Aid To Boys Town

Vintage Drum Center is sponsoring a campaign to find homes for unneeded drums and accessories, while at the same time helping unwanted, abused, or abandoned boys and girls at the world-famous Father Flannagan's Boys Town, at Boys Town, Nebraska.

Boys Town, a non-profit charitable organization, successfully cares for thousands of troubled boys and girls each year. They have music programs that can use selected musical instruments and other equipment in good condition. Some of the items they can particularly use are drumsets and hardware, 5x14 to 7x14 snare drums, cymbals, small percussion instruments, timpani, marimbas, vibes, chimes, and 26" or larger bass drums with stands. Brass and woodwind instruments are also needed.

If you would like to make a donation, call Dick Keiser at (402) 498-1880, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. CST. All donations are tax-deductible.

### Pro-Mark Offers Free Audio Cassette

A cassette featuring Pro-Mark founder and president Herb Brochstein with the Gulf Coast Giants of Jazz is now available from the drumstick makers. Brochstein was The Giants' drummer and co-leader. They were fixtures on the Houston music scene for many years, and accumulated many live recordings along the way, several examples of which are included on the tape. For a free copy, write to Pro-Mark at Dept. T, 10707 Craighead Drive, Houston, TX 77025. Quantities are limited.

### Endorser News

**Mike Baird** endorsing Aquarian drumheads and DW drums.

**Dave Grohl** using Aquarian heads and *Power-Sleeve* drumsticks.

**Aaron Comess** (Spin Doctors), **Cindy Blackman** (Lenny Kravitz), **Jimmy DeGrasso** (Suicidal Tendencies), **Chris Worley** (Jackyl), and **Greg Hutchinson** (Roy Hargrove) using Zildjian cymbals and sticks.

**John "J.R." Robinson** now playing Pearl drums.

New to the Mapex endorser list are **Matt Sorum**, **Mike Portnoy**, **Scott Mercado** (Candlebox), **Andy James** (Savatage), **Chris**

**Frazier** (Tribe After Tribe, Steve Vai), **Michael Blakey** (Tidal Force), **Jim Brock** (Joe Walsh, Janis Ian), **Dean Kazan** (Steelheart), **Steve Larson** (Sammy Kershaw Band), **Ric McClure** (Trisha Yearwood), **Mark DuFresne** (Confederate Railroad), and **Tom McWilliams** (Jon Secada).

Now playing Fredrico Percussion are **Jack DeJohnette**, **Anton Fig**, **Lenny White**, **Glen Velez**, **Nana Vasconcelos**, **Joel Rosenblatt**, **Obo Addy**, **Troy Davis** (Terence Blanchard), **Vince Littleton** (Merl Saunders & the Rainforest Band), and **Brian Melick**.

**James Gadson** (Anita Baker), **Butch Trucks**, **Kevin Ricard** (Kenny Loggins), **Chris Trujillo** (Toto), and **Lenny Castro** using Carolina drumsticks.

### Indy Quickies

**Max Roach** was the recent recipient of the Sonneck Society for American Music's Honorary Member Award for his significant contributions to American music.

**Don Pesceone**, executive director of Drum Corps International (DCI), has announced his retirement effective this September 1. Pesceone has held the post since the establishment of DCI in 1972.

This past February the premier of *Six Drumsets*, by Berklee College of Music faculty member Steve Wilkes, was held at the Berklee College Performance Center in Boston, Massachusetts. *Six Drumsets* is a composition in four movements utilizing world music rhythms, linear phrasing and techniques, electronic percussion, and acoustic drums. The piece was performed by Wilkes, Berklee alumni Marko Djordjevic and Kurt Schuler, current students Takeshi Ichikawa and John Raab, and faculty member Jon Hazilla.

**The Drummers Alliance Beat '93 U.K. Final** was held this past December. The contest is held "to find the best undiscovered drummer/percussionist in Britain," and this past year's winners were: Gregory Edward (percussion solo), Peter Biggin (first-place under sixteen drumset), Craig Bowen (second-place under sixteen), Chris Bailey (first-place over sixteen), and Gary Lewis (second-place over sixteen). Prizes were supplied by Remo, Sabian, Vic Firth, and Carlsboro music shops.

**Drumtech** drum teaching studios of London, England recently celebrated its tenth anniversary with clinics featuring **Steve Smith** and **Richard Bailey**.

### Upcoming Clinics And Contests

**Soundcheck**, the Yamaha Music Showcase, is announcing its eighth annual call to unsigned musicians around the country. Soundcheck provides aspiring artists the opportunity to have their music heard by industry professionals. This year, each of five finalist bands will receive a \$3,000 development fund. Soundcheck invites any musician who writes original material of any style, performs with a band of two or more members, and is not currently signed to a nationally distributed record label to enter. All entries must be received by May 31, 1994. For more information and an

entry form, call Soundcheck at (800) 451-7625.

**Simon Phillips** will be performing a master class at Drummers Collective in New York City at 7:00 P.M. on Monday, May 23. Giveaways will include Zildjian and Drummers Collective tee shirts and hats as well as a Zildjian cymbal. Zildjian will be co-sponsoring the event. This past February Drummers Collective hosted **Walredo Reyes, Sr.** in a clinic at their World Rhythm Center.

This Year's **Istanbul International Festival** will be held June 15 through July 25 in Istanbul, Turkey. Among the artists scheduled to appear are John Scofield, Pat Metheny, John Abercrombie, and Jack DeJohnette. Tickets for individual performances range from \$10 to \$40, and may be purchased through Megatrails, Inc. For more information, contact Megatrails at tel: (800) 547-1211, (212) 888-9819, Fax: (212) 888-9819.

The fourth annual **Jamaica-Ocho Rios Jazz Festival** will be held this June 12 - 19. Most events are open and free to the public, though some will require an entrance fee of \$15 to \$20. Many area hotels are providing packages featuring accommodations and passes to the events. The Festival will feature top jazz artists from Great Britain, France, Holland, Japan, the United States, and the Caribbean. For information, call the Jazz Hotline at (809) 927-3544 or the Jamaica Tourist Board at (800) 233-4582.

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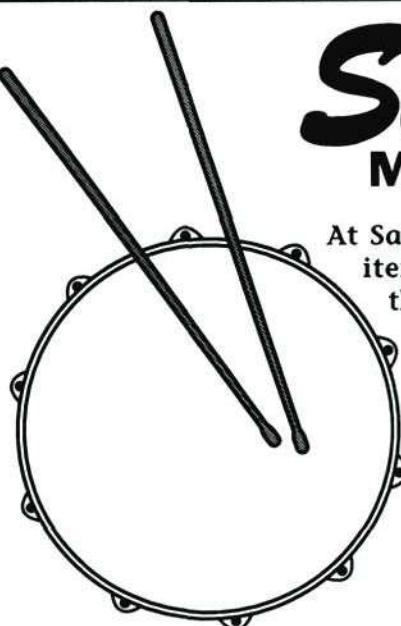
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# Drumkit Of The Month



The originality of Steve Kennedy's kit goes beyond its tartan plaid fabric covering. Steve, of Indianapolis, Indiana, built the bass drum and toms himself using maple shells and 1965 Ludwig parts. A Zildjian/Noble & Cooley snare drum and Zildjian cymbals complete the kit, which is mounted on a Gibraltar rack. The simple-looking kit is deceptively high-tech; Steve employs May internal mic's in the bass and toms and the Zildjian ZMC miking system for the cymbals, and augments the drums with a variety of electronic percussion interfaces, samplers, and synthesizers.

## Photo Requirements

1. Photos must be in color and of high quality. (35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered. Polaroids cannot be accepted.)
2. You may send more than one view of the kit, but only one photo will be published.
3. Photos should be of drums only; no people should be in the shot.
4. Drums should be photographed against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds such as in your basement, garage, or bedroom.
5. Be sure that those attributes of your kit that make it special are clearly visible in the photo.

Send your photo(s) to:

Drumkit Of The Month,

Modern Drummer

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Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288

Please note that photos cannot be returned, so don't send any originals you can't bear to part with.

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# **MD's Festival Weekend '94**

*Modern Drummer* magazine is pleased to present these outstanding artists:

**SATURDAY, MAY 21**

**MARVIN "SMITTY" SMITH**

**And His SEPTET**

(Courtesy of Pearl Drums)

**SIMON PHILLIPS**

(Courtesy of Zildjian Cymbals, Tama Drums,  
and Pro-Mark Drumsticks)

**TALKING DRUMS**

Courtesy of Paiste Cymbals, LP Music Group, and Yamaha Drums

**CHAD SMITH**

(Courtesy of Vater Percussion)

**PAN AROUND THE NECK**

(Courtesy of P.R. Percussion, Tropical Hammer Steel Drums,  
and The Arts Council of Hillsborough County Schools)

**SUNDAY, MAY 22**

**ROD MORGENSEIN**

**And THE DIXIE DREGS**

(Courtesy of Sabian Cymbals, Premier Drums,  
and Vic Firth Drumsticks)

**JOHN "J.R." ROBINSON**

(Courtesy of Zildjian Drumsticks)

**CLAYTON CAMERON**

(Courtesy of Ludwig Drums and Calato/Regal Tip Drumsticks)

**MATT SORUM**

(Courtesy of Easton AHEAD Drumsticks and Zildjian Cymbals)

**ED URIBE**

(Courtesy of KAT, Inc. and Vic Firth Drumsticks)

**Beginning each day at 1:00 P.M.**

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(Located within convenient traveling distance by public or private transportation from  
anywhere in the New York City/North New Jersey area)

## **THE MAIL-IN ORDER CUTOFF DATE HAS PASSED!**

However, you may call *Modern Drummer*'s offices, at (201) 239-4140 to determine if tickets are still available. If so, you will be instructed as to how you may order your tickets at that time. Tickets will be accompanied by a flyer giving directions and transportation information.

Single-day tickets for either date: \$23.00; package tickets for both days: \$42.00.

Seating will be general admission, so plan to arrive early for your choice of seats. (New Jersey weather can be fickle, and every Festival has been touched by rain. We suggest you come prepared.) Theater doors will open at 12:30 P.M. Food service will be available throughout the day, beginning at 12:00 noon, with sandwiches, snacks, and beverages on sale. Still cameras are welcome, but video cameras cannot be permitted.

**Attention long-distance travelers!**

For the best available airline fares and reservations, along with hotel accommodations at discount rates, call MD's exclusive Festival Weekend '94 travel agency, Travel Ventures, at (800) 863-8484 ([201] 239-8900 in New Jersey), or Fax them at (201) 239-8969. Identify yourself as a Festival-goer upon calling.

**SEE YOU THERE!**

# TERRY BOZZIO



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# Orestes Vilatо

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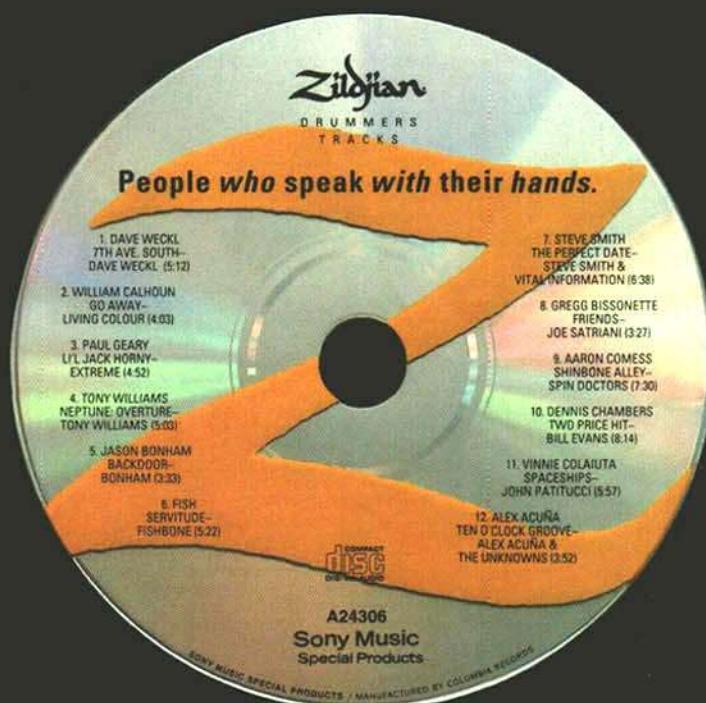


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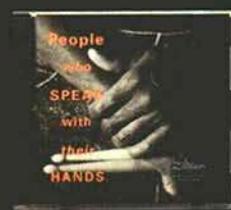
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